WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

LENIN

COLLECTED WORKS

27

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V. I. LENIN

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PREFACE

Volume Twenty-seven contains the works of Lenin written between February 21 and July 27, 1918.

It includes reports, speeches and articles reflecting Lenin's work as leader of the Communist Party and the Soviet state in the period of the struggle for peace, for Soviet Russia's revolutionary withdrawal from the imperialist war, for consolidation of Soviet power and for the development of socialist construction during the respite that followed the conclusion of the Brest peace.

An important place in the volume is occupied by documents aimed against the provocatory policy of Trotsky and the "Left Communists", a policy of involving the young Soviet Republic, which as yet had no army, in war. Included among these documents are the articles: "The Revolutionary Phrase", "Peace or War?", "A Painful but Necessary Lesson", "Strange and Monstrous", "On a Businesslike Basis", "A Serious Lesson and a Serious Responsibility", and also the reports and replies to debates on the question of peace at the Seventh Party Congress and the Extraordinary Fourth Congress of Soviets.

Lenin's pamphlet "*Left-Wing*" *Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality* sums up the results of the struggle with the "Left Communists" over the Brest peace and domestic policy, and shows that the "Left Communists" expressed the interests of the "frenzied petty bourgeois" and were "instruments of imperialist provocation".

A large part of the volume is taken up by works devoted to socialist construction, the organisation of nation-wide accounting and control, raising the productivity of labour, the development of socialist competition, and the inculcation of new, proletarian discipline. These works include

Lenin's famous *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*, in which he outlined the programme of socialist construction and ways of creating new; socialist production relations.

Other documents, "On the Famine. *A Letter to the Workers of Petrograd*", the "Report on Combating the Famine" delivered at the Joint Meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C., the Moscow Soviet of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies and the Trade Unions on June 4, form part of a group that shows the spread of the socialist revolution in the rural areas, the struggle against the kulaks, the organisation of aid for the rural poor, and the establishment of the food dictatorship.

A number of Lenin's speeches and articles deal with the struggle against internal and external counter-revolution and the defence of the Soviet Republic. These documents include: "Speech Delivered at a Public Meeting in the Sokolniki Club", June 21, "Speech at a Public Meeting in the Simonovsky Sub-District", June 28, "Interview Granted to an Izvestia Correspondent" concerning the Left S.R. insurrection, and the "Report Delivered at a Moscow Gubernia Conference of Factory Committees", July 23.

The present volume contains seventeen new documents published for the first time in the *Collected Works*. Most of these characterise Lenin's work in organising the defence of the Republic at the time of the offensive of the German imperialists and when foreign military intervention and civil war were just beginning. These include: "The Socialist Fatherland Is in Danger!", "Draft of an Order to All Soviets", drawing attention to the need for defence in view of the possibility of the Germans' breaking off peace negotiations, and "Directives to the Vladivostok Soviet" concerning the Japanese landing in Vladivostok.

In the letter to Zinoviev, Lashevich and Stasova, and also in the note "By Direct Line. To Zinoviev, the Smoly, Petrograd", published in the *Collected Works* for the first time, Lenin exposes the disorganising and anti-state conduct of Zinoviev, who held up dispatch of Petrograd workers to the front to the detriment of the country's defence.

Other works published in the *Collected Works* for the first time include: two documents concerning the foundation of

a socialist academy; two documents on revolutionary tribunals, "To Members of the Collegium of the Commissariat for Justice" and "Draft Decision of the Council of People's Commissars"; the letter "To the C.C., R.C.P." protesting against a mild sentence passed for bribery; "Basic Propositions on Economic and Especially on Banking Policy"; and "Food Detachments", a speech delivered at workers' meetings in Moscow on June 20.

The "Protest to the German Government Against the Occupation of the Crimea", written on May 11, 1918, had not previously been published and appears for the first time in the *Collected Works*.

V. I. LENIN
1918

THE REVOLUTIONARY PHRASE[1]

When I said at a Party meeting that the revolutionary phrase about a revolutionary war might ruin our revolution, I was reproached for the sharpness of my polemics. There are, however, moments, when a question must be raised sharply and things given their proper names, the danger being that otherwise irreparable harm may be done to the Party and the revolution.

Revolutionary phrase-making, more often than not, is a disease from which revolutionary parties suffer at times when they constitute, directly or indirectly, a combination, alliance or intermingling of proletarian and petty-bourgeois elements, and when the course of revolutionary events is marked by big, rapid zigzags. By revolutionary phrase-making we mean the repetition of revolutionary slogans irrespective of objective circumstances at a given turn in events, in the given state of affairs obtaining at the time. The slogans are superb; alluring, intoxicating, but there are no grounds for them; such is the nature of the revolutionary phrase.

Let us examine the groups of arguments, the most important of them at least, in favour of a revolutionary war in Russia today, in January and February 1918, and the comparison of this slogan with objective reality will tell us whether the definition I give is correct.

1

Our press has always spoken of the need to prepare for a revolutionary war in the event of the victory of socialism in one country with capitalism still in existence in the neighbouring countries. That is indisputable.

The question is—how have those preparations *actually* been made since our October Revolution?

We have prepared in this way: we had to demobilise the army, we were compelled to, compelled by circumstances so obvious, so weighty and so insurmountable that, far from a "trend" or mood having arisen in the Party against demobilisation, there was not a single voice raised against it. Anyone who wants to *give some thought* to the class causes of such an unusual phenomenon as the demobilisation of the army by the Soviet Socialist Republic before the war with a neighbouring imperialist state is finished will without great difficulty discover these causes in the social composition of a backward country with a small-peasant economy, reduced to extreme economic ruin after three years of war. An army of many millions was demobilised and the creation of a Red Army on *volunteer* lines was begun—such are the facts.

Compare these facts with the talk of a revolutionary war in January and February 1918, and the nature of the revolutionary phrase will be clear to you.

If this "championing" of a revolutionary war by, say, the Petrograd and Moscow organisations had not been an empty phrase we should have had other *facts* between October and January; we should have seen a determined struggle on their part against demobilisation. But there has been nothing of the sort.

We should have seen the Petrograders and Muscovites sending *tens of thousands* of agitators and soldiers to the front and should have received daily reports from there about their struggle against demobilisation, about the successes of their struggle, about the halting of demobilisation.

There has been nothing of the sort.

We should have had hundreds of reports of regiments forming into a Red Army, using terrorism to halt demobilisation, renewing defences and fortifications against a possible offensive by German imperialism.

There has been nothing of the sort. Demobilisation is in full swing. The old army does not exist. The new army is only just being born.

Anyone who does not want to comfort himself with mere words, bombastic declarations and exclamations must see

that the "slogan" of revolutionary war in February 1918 is the emptiest of phrases, that it has nothing real, nothing objective behind it. This slogan today *contains* nothing but sentiment, wishes, indignation and resentment. And a slogan with such a content is called a revolutionary phrase.

Matters as they stand with our own Party and Soviet power as a whole, matters as they stand with the Bolsheviks of Petrograd and Moscow show that *so far* we have not succeeded in getting beyond the first steps in forming a volunteer Red Army. To hide from this unpleasant fact—and fact it is—behind a screen of words and at the same time not only do nothing to halt demobilisation but even *raise no objection* to it, is to be intoxicated with the sound of words.

A typical substantiation of what has been said is, for instance, the fact that in the Central Committee of our Party *the majority* of the most prominent opponents of a separate peace voted *against* a revolutionary war, voted against it both in January and in February.[2] What does that mean? It means that everybody who is not afraid to look truth in the face recognises the impossibility of a revolutionary war.

In such cases the truth is evaded by putting forward, or attempting to put forward, arguments. Let us examine them.

2

Argument No. 1. In 1792 France suffered economic ruin to no less an extent, but a revolutionary war cured everything, was an inspiration to everyone, gave rise to enthusiasm and carried everything before it. Only those who do not believe in the revolution, only opportunists could oppose a revolutionary war in our, more profound revolution.

Let us compare this reason, or this argument, with the facts. It is a fact that in France at the end of the eighteenth century the *economic* basis of the new, higher mode of production was *first created*, and then, as a result, as a superstructure, the powerful revolutionary army appeared. France abandoned feudalism before other countries, swept it away *in the course of a few years* of victorious revolution, and led

a people who were not fatigued from any war, who had won land and freedom, who had been made stronger by the elimination of feudalism, led them to war against a number of economically and politically backward peoples.

Compare this to contemporary Russia. Incredible fatigue from war. A new economic system, superior to the organised state capitalism of technically well-equipped Germany, *does not yet exist*. It is only being founded. Our peasants have only a law on the socialisation of the land, but not one single year of free (from the landowner and from the torment of war) work. Our workers have begun to throw the capitalists overboard but have not yet managed to organise production, arrange for the exchange of products, arrange the grain supply and *increase* productivity of labour.

This is what we advanced towards, this is the road we took, but it is obvious that the new and higher economic system *does not yet exist.*

Conquered feudalism, consolidated bourgeois freedom, and a well-fed peasant opposed to feudal countries—such was the economic basis of the "miracles" in the sphere of war in 1792 and 1793.

A country of small peasants, hungry and tormented by war, only just beginning to heal its wounds, opposed to technically and organisationally higher productivity of labour—such is the objective situation at the beginning of 1918.

That is why any reminiscing over 1792, etc., is nothing but a revolutionary phrase. People repeat slogans, words, war cries, but are afraid to analyse objective reality.

3

Argument No. 2. Germany "cannot attack", *her* growing revolution will not allow it.

The Germans "cannot attack" was an argument repeated millions of times in January and at the beginning of February 1918 by opponents of a separate peace. The more cautious of them said that there was a 25 to 33 per cent probability (approximately, of course) of the Germans being unable to attack.

The facts refuted these calculations. The opponents of a separate peace here, too, frequently brush aside facts, fearing their iron logic.

What was the source of this mistake, which real revolutionaries (and not revolutionaries of sentiment) should be able to recognise and analyse?

Was it because we, in general, manoeuvred and agitated *in connection with* the peace negotiations? It was not. We had to manoeuvre and agitate. But we also had to choose "our own time" for manoeuvres and agitation—while it was still possible to manoeuvre and agitate—and also for calling a halt to all manoeuvres when the issue became acute.

The source of the mistake was that our relations of revolutionary co-operation with the German revolutionary workers were turned into an empty phrase. We helped and are helping the German revolutionary workers in every way we can—fraternisation, agitation, the publication of secret treaties, etc. That was help in deeds, real help.

But the declaration of some of our comrades—"the Germans cannot attack"—was an empty phrase. We have only just been through a revolution in our own country. We all know very well why it was easier for a revolution to *start* in Russia than in Europe. We saw that we could not check the offensive of Russian imperialism in June 1917, although our revolution had not only begun, had not only overthrown the monarchy, but had set up Soviets everywhere. We saw, we knew, we explained to the workers—wars are conducted by governments. To stop a bourgeois war it is necessary to overthrow the bourgeois government.

The declaration "the Germans cannot attack" was, therefore, tantamount to declaring "we know that the German Government will be overthrown *within the next few weeks*". Actually we did not, and could not, know this, and for this reason the declaration was an empty phrase.

It is one thing to be certain that the German revolution is maturing and to do your part towards helping it mature, to serve it as far as possible by *work*, agitation and fraternisation, anything you like, but help the maturing of the revolution by *work*. That is what revolutionary proletarian internationalism means.

It is another thing to declare, directly or indirectly, openly or covertly, that the German revolution is *already mature* (although it obviously is not) and to base your tactics on it. There is not a grain of revolutionism in that, there is nothing in it but phrase-making.

Such is the source of the error contained in the "proud", "striking", "spectacular", "resounding" declaration "the Germans cannot attack".

4

The assertion that "we are helping the German revolution by resisting German imperialism, and are thus bringing nearer Liebknecht's victory over "Wilhelm" is nothing but a variation of the same high-sounding nonsense.

It stands to reason that victory by Liebknecht—which will be possible and inevitable when the German revolution reaches maturity—would deliver us from all international difficulties, including revolutionary war. Liebknecht's victory would deliver us from the consequences of any foolish act of ours. But surely that does not justify foolish acts?

Does any sort of "resistance" to German imperialism help the German revolution? Anyone who cares to think a little, or even to recall the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia, will quite easily realise that resistance to reaction helps the revolution only when it is *expedient*. During a half century of the revolutionary movement in Russia we have experienced many cases of resistance to reaction that were not expedient. We Marxists have always been proud that we determined the expediency of any form of struggle by a precise calculation of the mass forces and class relationships. We have said that an insurrection is not always expedient; unless the prerequisites exist among the masses it is a gamble; we have often condemned the most heroic forms of resistance by individuals as inexpedient and harmful from the point of view of the revolution. In 1907, on the basis of bitter experience we rejected resistance to participation in the Third Duma as inexpedient, etc., etc.

To help the German revolution we must either limit ourselves to propaganda, agitation and fraternisation as long as the forces are not strong enough for a firm, serious, decisive blow in an open military or insurrectionary clash,

or we must accept that clash, *if we are sure* it will not help the enemy.

It is clear to everyone (except those intoxicated with empty phrases) that to undertake a serious insurrectionary or military clash *knowing* that we have no forces, *knowing* that we have no army, is a gamble that will not help the German workers but will make their struggle more difficult and make matters easier for their enemy and for our enemy.

5

There is yet another argument that is so childishly ridiculous that I should never have believed it possible if I had not heard it with my own ears.

"Back in October, didn't the opportunists say that we had no forces, no troops, no machine-guns and no equipment, but these things all appeared during the struggle, when the struggle of class against class began. They will also make their appearance in the struggle of the proletariat of Russia against the capitalists of Germany, the German proletariat will come to our help."

As matters stood in October, we had made a precise calculation of the *mass* forces. We not only thought, we *knew* with certainty, from the experience of the *mass* elections to the Soviets, that the overwhelming majority of the workers and soldiers had *already* come over to our side in September and in early October. We knew, even if only from the voting at the Democratic Conference[3] that the coalition had also lost the support of the peasantry—and that meant that our cause had *already* won.

The following were the *objective* conditions for the October insurrectionary struggle:

(1) there was no longer any bludgeon over the heads of the soldiers—it was abolished in February 1917 (Germany has not yet reached "her" February);

(2) the soldiers, like the workers, had already had enough of the coalition and had finished their conscious, planned, heartfelt *withdrawal* from it.

This, and this alone, determined the *correctness of the slogan* "for an insurrection" *in October* (the slogan would have been incorrect in July, when we did *not* advance it).

The mistake of the opportunists of October[4] was not their "concern" for objective conditions (only children could think it was) but their *incorrect appraisal of facts*—they got hold of trivialities and did not see the *main thing*, that the Soviets had come over from conciliation to us.

To compare an armed clash with Germany (that has not yet experienced "her" February or her "July", to say nothing of October), with a Germany that has a *monarchist*, bourgeois-imperialist government—to compare that with the October insurrectionary struggle against the enemies of the Soviets, the Soviets that had been maturing since February 1917 and had reached maturity in September and October, is such childishness that it is only a subject for ridicule. Such is the absurdity to which people are led by empty phrases!

6

Here is another sort of argument. "But Germany will strangle us economically with a separate peace treaty, she will take away coal and grain and will enslave us."

A very wise argument—we must accept an armed clash, *without an army*, even though that clash is certain to result not only in our enslavement, but also in our strangulation, the seizure of grain without any compensation, putting us in the position of Serbia or Belgium; we have to accept that, because *otherwise* we shall get an unfavourable treaty, Germany will take from us 6,000 or 12,000 million in tribute by instalments, will take grain for machines, etc.

O heroes of the revolutionary phrase! In renouncing the "enslavement" to the imperialists they *modestly* pass over in silence the fact that it is necessary to *defeat* imperialism to be completely delivered from enslavement.

We are accepting an unfavourable treaty and a separate peace knowing that *today* we are not yet ready for a revolutionary war, that we have to bide our time (as we did when we tolerated Kerensky's bondage, tolerated the bondage of our own bourgeoisie from July to October), we must wait until we are stronger. Therefore, *if there is a chance* of obtaining the most unfavourable separate peace, we *absolutely must accept* it in the interests of the socialist revolution,

which is *still* weak (since the maturing revolution in Germany has not *yet* come to our help, to the help of the Russians). Only if a separate peace is *absolutely* impossible shall we have to fight immediately—*not because it will be correct tactics, but because we shall have no choice.* If it proves impossible there will be no occasion for a dispute over tactics. There will be nothing but the inevitability of the most furious resistance. But as long as we have a choice we must choose a separate peace and an extremely unfavourable treaty, because that will still be a hundred times better than the position of Belgium.[5]

Month by month we are growing stronger, although we are today still weak. Month by month the international socialist revolution is maturing in Europe, although it is not yet fully mature. Therefore ... therefore, "revolutionaries" (God save us from them) argue that we must accept battle when German imperialism is *obviously* stronger than we are but is *weakening* month by month (because of the slow but certain maturing of the revolution in Germany).

The "revolutionaries" of sentiment argue magnificently, they argue superbly!

7

The last argument, the most specious and most widespread, is that "this obscene peace is a disgrace, it is betrayal of Latvia, Poland, Courland and Lithuania".

Is it any wonder that the Russian *bourgeoisie* (and their hangers-on, the *Novy Luch*,[6] *Dyelo Naroda*[7] and *Novaya Zhizn*[8] gang) are the most zealous in elaborating this allegedly internationalist argument?

No, it is no wonder, for this argument is a trap into which the bourgeoisie are deliberately dragging the Russian Bolsheviks, and into which some of them are falling unwittingly, because of their love of phrases.

Let us examine the argument from the standpoint of theory; which should be put first, the right of nations to self-determination, or socialism?

Socialism should.

Is it permissible, because of a contravention of the right of nations to self-determination, to allow the Soviet Social-

ist Republic to be devoured, to expose it to the blows of imperialism at a time when imperialism is obviously stronger and the Soviet Republic obviously weaker?

No, it is not permissible—that is *bourgeois* and not socialist politics.

Further, would peace on the condition that Poland, Lithuania and Courland are returned "to us" be *less* disgraceful, be any less an annexationist peace?

From the point of view of the Russian bourgeois, *it would.*

From the point of view of the socialist-internationalist, *it would not.*

Because if German imperialism set Poland free (which at one time some *bourgeois* in Germany desired), it would squeeze Serbia, Belgium, etc., *all the more.*

When the Russian bourgeoisie wail against the "obscene" peace, they are correctly expressing their class interests.

But when some Bolsheviks (suffering from the phrase disease) repeat that argument, it is simply very sad.

Examine the *facts* relating to the behaviour of the Anglo-French bourgeoisie. They are doing everything they can to drag us into the war against Germany now, they are offering us millions of blessings, boots, potatoes, shells, locomotives (on credit ... that is not "enslavement", don't fear that! It is "only" credit!). They want us to fight against Germany now.

It is obvious why they should want this; they want it because, in the first place, we should engage part of the German forces. And secondly, because Soviet power might collapse most easily from an untimely armed clash with German imperialism.

The Anglo-French bourgeoisie are setting a trap for us: please be kind enough to go and fight *now*, our gain will be magnificent. The Germans will plunder you, will "do well" in the East, will agree to cheaper terms in the West, and furthermore, Soviet power will be swept away.... Please do fight, Bolshevik "allies", we shall help you!

And the "Left" (God save us from them) Bolsheviks[9] are walking into the trap by reciting the most revolutionary phrases....

Oh yes, one of the manifestations of the traces of the petty-bourgeois spirit is surrender to revolutionary phrases. This is an old story that is perennially new....

8

In the summer of 1907 our Party also experienced an attack of the revolutionary phrase that was, in some respect, analogous.

St. Petersburg and Moscow, nearly all the Bolsheviks were in favour of boycotting the Third Duma; they were guided by "sentiment" instead of an objective analysis and walked into a trap.

The disease has recurred.

The times are more difficult. The issue is a million times more important. To fall ill at such a time is to risk ruining the revolution.

We must fight against the revolutionary phrase, we have to fight it, we absolutely must fight it, so that at some future time people will not say of us the bitter truth that "a revolutionary phrase about revolutionary war ruined the revolution".

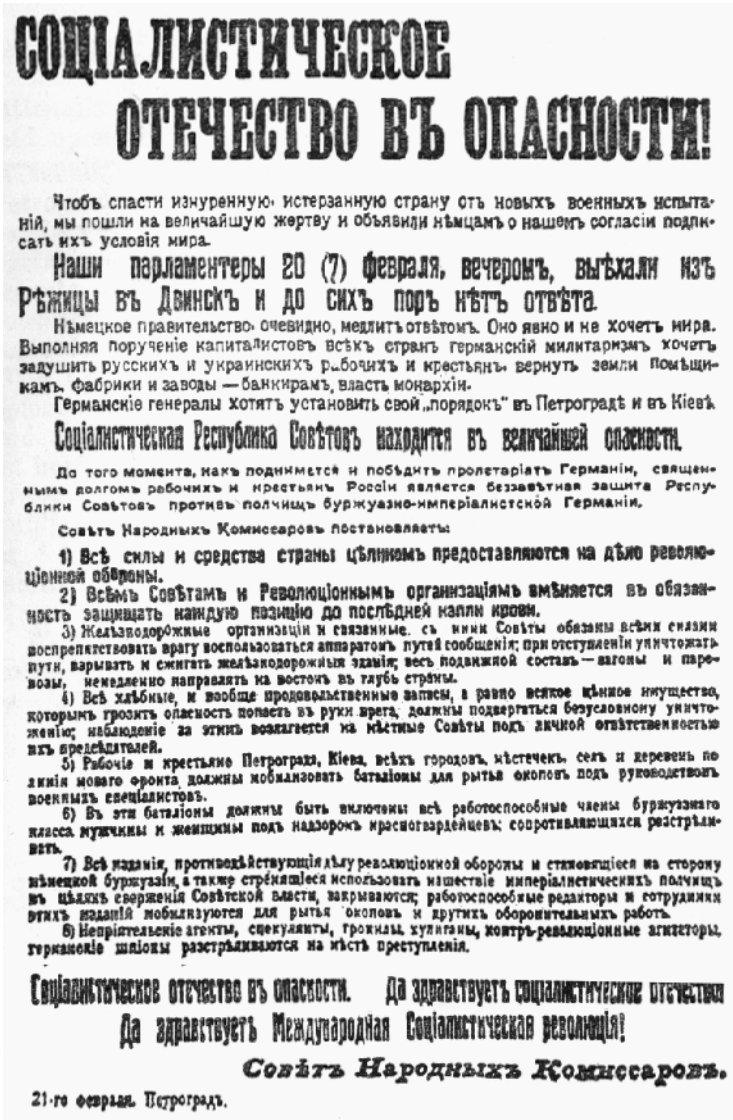
Pravda No. 31, February 21, 1918
Signed: *Karpov*

Izvestia VTsIK No. 43,
March 8, 1918

Published according to the *Pravda* text, collated with the *Izvestia* text

THE SOCIALIST FATHERLAND IS IN DANGER![10]

In order to save this exhausted and ravaged country from new ordeals of war we decided to make a very great sacrifice and informed the Germans of our readiness to sign their terms of peace. Our truce envoys left Rezhitsa for Dvinsk in the evening on February 20 (7), *and still there is no reply*. The German Government is evidently in no hurry to reply. It obviously does not want peace. Fulfilling the task with which it has been charged by the capitalists of all countries, German militarism *wants to strangle the Russian and Ukrainian workers and peasants*, *to return the land to the landowners*, *the mills and factories to the bankers*, *and power to the monarchy*. The German generals want to establish their "order" in Petrograd and Kiev. *The Socialist Republic of Soviets is in gravest danger*. Until the proletariat of Germany rises and triumphs, it is the sacred duty of the workers and peasants of Russia devotedly to defend the Republic of Soviets against the hordes of bourgeois-imperialist Germany. The Council of People's Commissars resolves: (1) *The country's entire manpower and resources are placed entirely at the service of revolutionary defence.* (2) *All Soviets and revolutionary organisations are ordered to defend every position to the last drop of blood.* (3) Railway organisations and the Soviets associated with them must do their utmost to prevent the enemy from availing himself of the transport system; in the event of a retreat, they are to destroy the tracks and blow up or burn down the railway buildings; all rolling stock —carriages and locomotives—must be immediately dispatched eastward, into the interior of the country. (4) All grain and food stocks generally, as well as all valuable property in danger of falling into the enemy's hands, must be uncon-



СОЦІАЛИСТИЧЕСКОЕ ОТЕЧЕСТВО ВЪ ОПАСНОСТИ!

Чтобъ спасти изнуренную, истерзанную страну отъ новыхъ военныхъ испытаній, мы пошли на величайшую жертву и объявили нѣмцамъ о нашемъ согласіи подписать ихъ условія мира.

Наши парламентеры 20 (7) февраля, вечеромъ, выѣхали изъ Рѣжицы въ Двинскъ и до сихъ поръ нѣтъ отвѣта.

Нѣмецкое правительство, очевидно, медлитъ отвѣтомъ. Оно явно и не хочетъ мира. Выполняя порученіе капиталистовъ всѣхъ странъ германскій милитаризмъ хочетъ задушить русскихъ и украинскихъ рабочихъ и крестьянъ, вернуть земли помѣщикамъ, фабрики и заводы — банкирамъ, власть монархіи.

Германскіе генералы хотятъ установить свой „порядокъ" въ Петроградѣ и въ Кіевѣ.

Соціалистическая Республика Совѣтовъ находится въ величайшей опасности.

До того момента, какъ поднимется и побѣдитъ пролетаріатъ Германіи, священнымъ долгомъ рабочихъ и крестьянъ Россіи является беззавѣтная защита Республики Совѣтовъ противъ полчищъ буржуазно-имперіалистской Германіи.

Совѣтъ Народныхъ Комиссаровъ постановляетъ:

1) Всѣ силы и средства страны цѣликомъ предоставляются на дѣло революціонной обороны.

2) Всѣмъ Совѣтамъ и Революціоннымъ организаціямъ вмѣняется въ обязанность защищать каждую позицію до послѣдней капли крови.

3) Желѣзнодорожные организаціи и связанные съ ними Совѣты обязаны всѣми силами воспрепятствовать врагу воспользоваться аппаратомъ путей сообщенія; при отступленіи уничтожать пути, взрывать и сжигать желѣзнодорожныя зданія; весь подвижной составъ — вагоны и паровозы, немедленно направлять на востокъ въ глубь страны.

4) Всѣ хлѣбные, и вообще продовольственные запасы, а равно всякое цѣнное имущество, которымъ грозитъ опасность попасть въ руки врага, должны подвергаться безусловному уничтоженію; наблюденіе за этимъ возлагается на мѣстные Совѣты подъ личной отвѣтственностью ихъ предсѣдателей.

5) Рабочіе и крестьяне Петрограда, Кіева, всѣхъ городовъ, мѣстечекъ, селъ и деревень по линіи новаго фронта должны мобилизовать батальоны для рытья окоповъ подъ руководствомъ военныхъ спеціалистовъ.

6) Въ эти батальоны должны быть включены всѣ работоспособные члены буржуазнаго класса, мужчины и женщины подъ надзоромъ красногвардейцевъ; сопротивляющіеся разстрѣливать.

7) Всѣ изданія, противодѣйствующія дѣлу революціонной обороны и становящіеся на сторону нѣмецкой буржуазіи, а также стрѣмящіеся использовать нашествіе имперіалистическихъ полчищъ въ цѣляхъ свержения Совѣтской власти, закрываются; работоспособные редакторы и сотрудники этихъ изданій мобилизуются для рытья окоповъ и другихъ оборонительныхъ работъ.

8) Непріятельскіе агенты, спекулянты, громилы, хулиганы, контръ-революціонные агитаторы, германскіе шпіоны разстрѣливаются на мѣстѣ преступленія.

Соціалистическое отечество въ опасности. Да здравствуетъ соціалистическое отечество!

Да здравствуетъ Международная Соціалистическая революція!

Совѣтъ Народныхъ Комиссаровъ.

21-го февраля. Петроградъ.

The Decree "The Socialist Fatherland Is in Danger!" written by Lenin on February 21, 1918

Reduced

Reduced

The Decree the Socialist Fatherland is in Danger!
written by Lenin on February 21, 1918

ditionally destroyed; the duty of seeing that this is done is laid upon the local Soviets and their chairmen are made personally responsible. (5) The workers and peasants of Petrograd, Kiev, and of all towns, townships, villages and hamlets along the line of the new front are to mobilise battalions to dig trenches, under the direction of military experts. (6) *These battalions are to include all able-bodied members of the bourgeois class, men and women, under the supervision of Red Guards; those who resist are to be shot.* (7) All publications which oppose the cause of revolutionary defence and side with the German bourgeoisie, or which endeavour to take advantage of the invasion of the imperialist hordes in order to overthrow Soviet rule, are to be suppressed; able-bodied editors and members of the staffs of such publications are to be mobilised for the digging of trenches or for other defence work. (8) *Enemy agents, profiteers, marauders, hooligans, counter-revolutionary agitators and German spies are to be shot on the spot.*

The socialist fatherland is in danger! Long live the socialist fatherland! Long live the international socialist revolution!

Council of People's Commissars

February 21, 1918
Petrograd

Pravda No. 32,
February 22, 1918

Published according to the *Pravda* text

SUPPLEMENT TO THE DECREE OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS: "THE SOCIALIST FATHERLAND IS IN DANGER!"

For correct and strict implementation of the Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of February 21 it is decided:

(1) Every worker, after an 8-hour working day, is obliged to work three hours daily (or 4½ hours daily with every third day off) on war or administrative work.

(2) Everyone belonging to the rich class or well-off groups (income not less than 500 rubles per month, or owning not less than 1,500 rubles in cash) is obliged to provide himself immediately with a *work book*, in which will be entered weekly whether he has performed his due share of war or administrative work. The entries will be made by the trade union, Soviet of Workers' Deputies or local Red Guard detachment, whichever he belongs to.

Work books for well-off persons will cost 50 rubles each.

(3) Non-workers who do not belong to the well-off classes are also obliged to have a work book, for which they will pay five rubles (or one ruble, at cost price).

The work books of the well-off will have columns for weekly entry of income and expenditure.

Failure to possess a work book or the making of incorrect (and, still more, false) entries in it will be punished according to wartime laws.

All those who possess arms must obtain fresh permission to do so (a) from the local house committee, (b) from the bodies mentioned in item 2. Without these two permissions

possession of arms is forbidden; the penalty for violating this regulation is death by shooting.

The same penalty is incurred by concealing food.

For correct organisation of food supplies all citizens are obliged to join in *consumers' co-operative societies*, house....*

Written February 21 or 22, 1918

First published on December 22, 1927 in *Pravda* No. 293

Published according to the manuscript

* Here the manuscript breaks off.—*Ed.*

THE ITCH[11]

The itch is a painful disease. Ana when people are seized by the itch of revolutionary phrase-making the mere sight of this disease causes intolerable suffering.

Truths that are simple, clear, comprehensible, obvious and apparently indisputable to all who belong to the working people are distorted by those suffering from the above-mentioned kind of itch. Often this distortion arises from the best, the noblest and loftiest impulses, "merely" owing to a failure to digest well-known theoretical truths or a childishly crude, schoolboyishly slavish repetition of them irrelevantly (people don't know "what's what"). But the itch does not cease to be harmful on that account.

What, for example, could be more conclusive and clear than the following truth: a government that gave Soviet power, land, workers' control and *peace* to a people tortured by three years of predatory war would be invincible? Peace is the chief thing. If, after *conscientious* efforts to obtain a general and just peace, it turned out in actual fact that it was impossible to obtain this *at the present time*, every peasant would understand that one would have to adopt not a general peace, but a separate and unjust peace. Every peasant, even the most ignorant and illiterate, would understand this and *appreciate* a government that gave him even such a peace.

Bolsheviks must have been stricken by the vile itch of phrase-making to forget this and evoke the peasants' most legitimate dissatisfaction with them when this itch has led to a new war being launched by predatory Germany against overtired Russia! The ludicrous and pitiful "theoretical" trivialities and sophistries under which this itch is dis-

guised I have pointed out in an article entitled "The Revolutionary Phrase" (*Pravda*, February 21 [8]).* I would not be recalling this if the same itch had not cropped up today (what a catching disease!) in a new place.

To explain how this has happened, I shall cite first of all a little example, quite simply and clearly, without any "theory"—if the itch claims to be "theory" it is intolerable—and without erudite words or anything that the masses cannot understand.

Let us suppose Kalyayev,[12] in order to kill a tyrant and monster, acquires a revolver from an absolute villain, a scoundrel and robber, by promising him bread, money and vodka for the service rendered.

Can one condemn Kalyayev for his "deal with a robber" for the sake of obtaining a deadly weapon? Every sensible person will answer "no". If there is nowhere else for Kalyayev to get a revolver, and if his intention is really an honourable one (the killing of a tyrant, not killing for plunder), then he should not be reproached but commended for acquiring a revolver in this way.

But if a robber, in order to commit murder for the sake of plunder, acquires a revolver from another robber in return for money, vodka or bread, can one compare (not to speak of identifying) *such* a "deal with a robber" with the deal made by Kalyayev?

No, everyone who is not out of his mind or infected by the itch will agree that one cannot. Any peasant who saw an "intellectual" disavowing such an obvious truth by means of phrase-making would say: you, sir, ought not to be managing the state but should join the company of wordy buffoons or should simply put yourself in a steam bath and get rid of the itch.

If Kerensky, a representative of the ruling class of the bourgeoisie, i.e., the exploiters, makes a deal with the Anglo-French exploiters to get arms and potatoes from them and at the same time conceals from the people the treaties which promise (if successful) to give one robber Armenia, Galicia and Constantinople, and another robber Baghdad, Syria and so forth, is it difficult to understand that this deal is a

* See this volume, pp. 19-29.—*Ed*

predatory, swindling, vile deal on the part of Kerensky and his friends?

No, this is not difficult to understand. Any peasant, even the most ignorant and illiterate, will understand it.

But if a representative of the exploited, oppressed class, after this class has overthrown the exploiters, and published and annulled all the secret and annexationist treaties, is subjected to a bandit attack by the imperialists of Germany, can he be condemned for making a "deal" with the Anglo-French robbers, for obtaining arms and potatoes from them in return for money or timber, etc.? Can one find such a deal dishonourable, disgraceful, dirty?

No, one cannot. Every sensible man will understand this and will ridicule as silly fools those who with a "lordly" and learned mien undertake to prove that "the masses will not understand" the difference between the robber war of the imperialist Kerensky (and his dishonourable .deals with robbers for a division of jointly stolen spoils) and the *Kalyayev* deal of the Bolshevik Government with the Anglo-French robbers in order to get arms and potatoes to repel the German robber.

Every sensible man will say: to obtain weapons by purchase from a robber for the purpose of robbery is disgusting and villainous, but to buy weapons from the same robber for the purpose of a just war against an aggressor is something quite legitimate. Only mincing young ladies and affected youths who have "read books" and derived nothing but affectation from them can see something "dirty" in it. Apart from people of that category only those who have contracted the itch can fall into such an "error".

But will the German worker understand the difference between Kerensky's purchase of weapons from the Anglo-French robbers for the purpose of annexing Constantinople from the Turks, Galicia from the Austrians and Eastern Prussia from the Germans—and the Bolsheviks' purchase of weapons from the same robbers for the purpose of repelling Wilhelm when he has moved troops against socialist Russia which proposed an honourable and just peace to all, against Russia which has declared an end to the war?

It must be supposed that the German worker will "understand" this, firstly because he is intelligent and educated,

and secondly because he is used to a neat and cultured life, and suffers neither from the Russian itch in general, nor from the itch of revolutionary phrase-making in particular.

Is there a difference between killing for the purpose of robbery and the killing of an aggressor?

Is there a difference between a war of two groups of plunderers for a division of spoils and a just war for liberation from the attack of a plunderer against a people that has overthrown the plunderers?

Does not the appraisal whether I act well or badly in acquiring weapons from a robber depend on the end and object of these weapons? On their use for a war that is base and dishonourable or for one that is just and honourable?

Ugh! The itch is a nasty disease. And hard is the occupation of a man who has to give a steam bath to those infected with it....

P.S. The North Americans in their war of liberation against England at the end of the eighteenth century got help from Spain and France, who were her competitors and just as much colonial robbers as England. It is said that there were "Left Bolsheviks" to be found who contemplated writing a "learned work" on the "dirty deal" of these Americans....

Written on February 22, 1918

Published on February 22, 1918 in the evening edition of *Pravda* No. 33
Signed: *Karpov*

Published according to the *Pravda* text

PEACE OR WAR?

The Germans' reply, as the reader sees, sets us peace terms still more onerous than those of Brest-Litovsk. Nevertheless, I am absolutely convinced that only complete intoxication by revolutionary phrase-making can impel some people to refuse to sign these terms. It was precisely on that account that, by articles in *Pravda* (signed Karpov) on "The Revolutionary Phrase" and on "The Itch",* I began a relentless struggle against revolutionary phrase-making, which I saw and see now as the greatest menace to our Party (and, consequently, to the revolution as well). On many occasions in history revolutionary parties which wore strictly carrying out revolutionary slogans became infected with revolutionary phrase-making and perished as a result.

Hitherto I have been trying to persuade the Party to fight against revolutionary phrase-making. Now I must do this publicly. For—alas!—my very worst suppositions have proved justified.

On January 8, 1918, at a meeting of about 60 of the chief Party workers of Petrograd I read out my "Theses on the Question of the Immediate Conclusion of a Separate and Annexationist Peace" (17 theses, which will be published tomorrow). In these theses (paragraph 13) I declared war against revolutionary phrase-making, doing so in the mildest and most comradely fashion (I now profoundly condemn this mildness of mine). I said that the policy of refusing the proposed peace "would, perhaps, answer the needs of someone who is striving for an eloquent, spectacular and brilliant effect, but would completely fail to reckon with the objective

* See this volume, pp. 19-29, 36-39.—*Ed.*

relationship of class forces and material factors at the present period of the socialist revolution that has begun".

In the 17th thesis I wrote that if we refuse to sign the proposed peace, "very heavy defeats will compel Russia to conclude a still more unfavourable separate peace".

Things have turned out still worse, for our army, which is retreating and demobilising, is refusing to fight at all.

Under such conditions, only unrestrained phrase-making is capable of pushing Russia into war at the present time and I personally, of course, would not remain for a second either in the government or in the Central Committee of our Party if the policy of phrase-making were to gain the upper hand.

The bitter truth has now revealed itself with such terrible clarity that it is impossible not to see it. The entire bourgeoisie in Russia is rejoicing and gloating over the arrival of the Germans. Only those who are blind or intoxicated by phrases can close their eyes to the fact that the policy of a revolutionary war (*without an army*...) brings grist to the mill of our bourgeoisie. In Dvinsk, Russian officers are already going about wearing their shoulder-straps.

In Rezhitsa, the bourgeoisie exultantly welcomed the Germans. In Petrograd, on Nevsky Prospekt, and in bourgeois newspapers (*Rech*, *Dyelo Naroda*, *Novy Luch*, etc.), they are licking their lips with delight at the impending overthrow of Soviet power by the Germans.

Let everyone know: he who is against an immediate, even though extremely onerous peace, is endangering Soviet power.

We are compelled to endure an onerous peace. It will not halt the revolution in Germany and in Europe. We shall set about preparing a revolutionary army, not by phrases and exclamations (after the manner of those who since January 7 have done nothing even to halt our fleeing troops), *but by organisational work*, by deeds, by the creation of a proper, powerful army of the whole people.

Written in the morning
of February 23, 1918

Published on February 23, 1918
in the evening edition
of *Pravda* No. 34
Signed: *Lenin*

Published according to
the *Pravda* text

SPEECH AT THE JOINT MEETING OF THE BOLSHEVIK AND "LEFT" SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARY GROUPS OF THE ALL-RUSSIA C.E.C. FEBRUARY 23, 1918[13]

NEWSPAPER REPORT

Lenin spoke in defence of signing the German proposals. He began by saying that Soviet power must face up to the truth, that it must acknowledge the total impossibility of resistance to the Germans. He referred to the previous speakers who rejected signature to the treaty, but the view that we could organise an army in the near future was wholly without grounds; the army did not want to fight and no one could compel it to do so; if, however, we were to start organising an army, if we were to collect a small handful of valiant fighters whom we would throw into the jaws of imperialism, we would thereby lose energetic and ideologically equipped fighters who had won us victory.

Further, Lenin said that our Russian proletariat was not at all to blame if the German revolution was delayed. It would come but it was not there yet, and for us the best way out was to gain time; if we were to sign a peace treaty at the present moment, we could subsequently, by energetic, organised work, by railway construction and by putting food matters in order, create a strong and stable army for the defence of our revolution, and before that time the socialist revolution in Germany would certainly arrive.

Published on February 24, 1918 in *Izvestia of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies of the City of Moscow and Moscow Region* No. 32

Published according to the newspaper text

REPORT AT THE MEETING OF THE ALL-RUSSIA C.E.C. FEBRUARY 24, 1918[14]

Comrades, the terms put to us by the representatives of German imperialism are unprecedentedly severe, immeasurably oppressive, predatory terms. The German imperialists, taking advantage of the weakness of Russia, have their knee on our chest. Not to conceal from you the bitter truth of which I am deeply convinced, the situation being what it is, I must tell you that we have no other way out than to subscribe to these terms. And that any other proposal means to incur, either voluntarily or involuntarily, still worse evils and further (if one can speak here of degrees) complete subjection of the Soviet Republic, its enslavement to German imperialism, or it is a pitiful attempt at using words to evade a terrible, immeasurably cruel, but undeniable reality. Comrades, you all know very well, and many of you know it from personal experience, that the burden Russia had to bear in the imperialist war was for indisputable reasons that everyone can understand more terrible and severe than that endured by other countries. You know, therefore, that our army was martyrised and tortured by the war as was no other, that all the slanders cast at us by the bourgeois press and the parties which supported it, or which were hostile to the Soviet government, alleging that the Bolsheviks were demoralising the troops, are nonsense. I shall remind you once again of the proclamation which Krylenko, while still an ensign under Kerensky, distributed to the troops when he left for Petrograd, and which was reprinted in Pravda, and in which he said: we do not urge upon you any kind of mutiny, we urge upon you organised

political actions; strive to be as organised as possible.[15] Such was the propaganda of one of the most ardent representatives of the Bolsheviks, one who was most closely connected with the army. Everything that could be done to hold together this unprecedentedly, immeasurably fatigued army, and to make it stronger, was done. And if we see now, though I have entirely refrained, during the last month, for example, from setting out my view, which could seem pessimistic, if we have seen that, as regards the army during the past month, we have said all that could be said, and done all that could be done, to ease the situation, reality has shown us that after three years of war our army is altogether unable and unwilling to fight, That is the basic cause, simple, obvious, and in the highest degree bitter and painful, but absolutely clear, why, living side by side with an imperialist plunderer, we are compelled to sign peace terms when he puts his knee on our chest. That is why I say, fully conscious of the responsibility I bear, and repeat that no single member of the Soviet government has the right to evade this responsibility. Of course, it is pleasant and easy to tell the workers, peasants and soldiers, as it has been pleasant and easy to observe, how the revolution has gone forward after the October uprising, but when we have to acknowledge the bitter, painful, undeniable truth—the impossibility of a revolutionary war—it is impermissible now to evade this responsibility and we must shoulder it frankly. I consider myself obliged, I consider it essential to fulfil my duty and state plainly how things are, and therefore I am convinced that the class of toilers of Russia, who know what war is, what it has cost the working people and the degree of exhaustion to which it has led them, that—I do not doubt it for a moment—they along with us recognise the unprecedented severity, grossness and vileness of these peace terms and nevertheless approve our conduct. They will say: you undertook to propose the terms of an immediate and just peace, you should have utilised every possibility of delaying peace in order to see whether other countries would join in, whether the European proletariat, without whose help we cannot achieve a lasting socialist victory, would come to our aid. We did everything possible to protract the negotiations, we did even more than was possible; what we did was that after

the Brest negotiations we declared the state of war at an end, confident as many of us were that the situation in Germany would not allow her to make a brutal and savage attack on Russia.

This time we have had to endure a heavy defeat, and we have to be able to look the defeat straight in the face. Yes, hitherto the revolution has proceeded along an ascending line from victory to victory; now it has suffered a heavy defeat. The German working-class movement, which began so rapidly, has been interrupted for a time. We know that its main causes have not been abolished, and that they will grow and will inevitably extend because the excruciating war is being drawn out, because the bestiality of imperialism is being exposed ever more fully and obviously, and is opening the eyes of masses of people who might seem to be most remote from politics or incapable of understanding socialist policy. That is why this desperate, tragic situation has arisen, which compels us to accept peace now and will compel the masses of the working people to say: yes, they acted correctly, they did all they could to propose a just peace, they had to submit to a most oppressive and unfortunate peace because the country had no other way out. Their situation is such that they are forced to wage a life-and-death struggle against the Soviet Republic; if they are unable now to continue their intention of advancing against Petrograd and Moscow it is only because they are tied up in a bloody and predatory war with Britain, and because there is an internal crisis as well. When it is pointed out to me that the German imperialists may present us with still worse conditions tomorrow or the day after, I say that we must be prepared for that; naturally, living side by side with bestial plunderers, the Soviet Republic must expect to be attacked. If at present we cannot reply by war it is because the forces are lacking, because war can be waged only together with the people. If the successes of the revolution cause many comrades to say the opposite, that is not a mass phenomenon, it does not express the will and opinion of the real masses. If you go to the class of real toilers, to the workers and peasants, you will hear only one answer, that we are quite unable to wage war, we lack the physical strength, we are choked in blood, as one of the sol-

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

diers put it. These masses will understand us and approve of our concluding this forced and unprecedentedly onerous peace. It may be that the respite needed for an upswing of the masses will take no little time, but those who had to live through the long years of revolutionary battles in the period of the upswing of the revolution and the period when the revolution fell into decline, when revolutionary calls to the masses obtained no response from them, know that all the same the revolution always arose afresh. Therefore we say: yes, at present the masses are not in a state to wage war, at present every representative of the Soviet government is obliged to tell the people to its face the whole bitter truth. The time of unheard-of hardship and of three years of war and of the desperate disruption left by tsarism will pass away, and the people will recover its strength and find itself capable of resistance. At present the oppressor confronts us; it is best, of course, to answer oppression by a revolutionary war, by an uprising, but, unfortunately, history has shown that it is not always possible to answer oppression by an uprising. But to refrain from an uprising does not mean refraining from the revolution. Do not succumb to the provocation coming from the bourgeois newspapers, the enemies of Soviet power. Indeed, they have nothing except talk about "an obscene peace" and cries of "shame!" about this peace, but in fact this bourgeoisie greets the German conquerors with delight. They say: "Now, at last, the Germans will come and restore order", that is what they want and so they bait us with cries of "an obscene peace, a shameful peace". They want the Soviet government to give battle, an unheard-of battle, knowing that we lack strength, and they are dragging us into complete enslavement to the German imperialists in order to do a deal with the German gendarmes, but they express only their own class interests, because they know that the Soviet government is growing stronger. These voices, these cries against peace, are in my view the best proof of the fact that those who reject this peace have not only been consoling themselves with unjustified illusions but have succumbed to provocation. No, we must look the disastrous truth squarely in the face: before us is the oppressor with his knee on our chest, and we shall fight with all the means of revolutionary struggle. At present, however,

we are in a desperately difficult situation, our ally cannot hasten to our aid, the international proletariat cannot come just now, but it will come. This revolutionary movement, which at present has no possibility of offering armed resistance to the enemy, is rising and it will offer resistance later, but offer it it will. (*Applause*.)

A brief report of this speech was published on February 26, 1918 in *Pravda* No. 35

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Published according to the verbatim report

WHERE IS THE MISTAKE?[16]

The outstanding and most responsible opponents of the conclusion of a separate peace on the Brest terms have set out the essence of their arguments in the following form:

…“_____
_____
_____…”

Here are advanced the most concentrated, the most important arguments, set out almost in the form of a resolution. For convenience in analysing the arguments, we have numbered each proposition separately.

When one examines these arguments, the authors' main error immediately strikes the eye. They do not say a word about the concrete conditions of a revolutionary war at the present moment. The chief and fundamental consideration for the supporters of peace, namely, that it is impossible for us to fight *at the present time*, is altogether evaded. In reply—in reply, say, to my theses,* well-known to the authors since January 8—they put forward exclusively *general* considerations, abstractions, which inevitably turn into empty phrases. For every general historical statement applied to a particular case without a special analysis of the conditions of that particular case becomes an empty phrase.

* See present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 442-50.—*Ed.*

Take the first proposition. Its whole "point" is a reproach, an exclamation, a declamation, an effort to "shame" the opponent, an appeal to sentiment. See what bad people you are, they say: the imperialists are attacking you, "proclaiming" as their aim the suppression of the proletarian revolution, and you reply by agreeing to conclude peace! But our argument, as the authors are aware, is that by rejecting an onerous peace we *actually make it easier* for the enemy to suppress the proletarian revolution. And this conclusion of ours is reinforced (for example, in my theses) by a number of very concrete indications about the state of the army, its class composition, etc. The authors have avoided everything concrete and the result they arrive at is an empty phrase. For if the enemy are "proclaiming" that their aim is to suppress the revolution, then he is a bad revolutionary who by choosing an admittedly impossible form of resistance helps to achieve a transition from the "proclamation" to the *realisation* of the enemy's aims.

Second argument: "reproaches" are being intensified. You, they say, agree to peace at the first onslaught of the enemy.... Do the authors seriously suppose that this can be convincing for those who ever since January, long before the "onslaught", analysed the relationship of forces and the concrete conditions of the war at that time? Is it not phrase-making if "reproach" is regarded as argument against analysis??

Agreeing to peace under the present conditions, we are told, "is a surrender of the foremost contingent of the international proletariat to the international bourgeoisie".

Again an empty phrase. General truths are inflated in such a way that they become untrue and are turned into declamation. The German bourgeoisie is not "international", for the Anglo-French capitalists *welcome* our refusal to conclude peace. "Surrender", generally speaking, is a bad thing, but this praiseworthy truth does not decide every individual proposition, for refusal to fight under obviously unfavourable conditions can also be called surrender, but *such* surrender is obligatory for a serious revolutionary. Agreeing to enter the Third Duma, the concluding of peace with Stolypin, as the "Left" declamationists called it at that time, wag also, generally speaking, a surrender.

We are the foremost contingent in the sense of the revolutionary beginning, that is indisputable, but in order to be the foremost contingent in the sense of a military clash with the forces of foremost imperialism, that....*

Written February 23 or 24, 1918

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Published according to
the manuscript

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* Here the manuscript breaks off.—*Ed.*

AN UNFORTUNATE PEACE

Trotsky was right when he said: the peace may be a triply unfortunate peace, but the peace ending this hundredfold obscene war cannot be an obscene, disgraceful, dirty peace.

It is incredibly, unprecedentedly hard to sign an unfortunate, immeasurably severe, infinitely humiliating peace when the strong has the weak by the throat. But it is impermissible to give way to despair, impermissible to forget that history has examples of still greater humiliations, still more unfortunate, onerous peace terms. Yet even so, the peoples crushed by bestially cruel conquerors were able to recover and rise again.

Napoleon I crushed and humiliated Prussia immeasurably more heavily than Wilhelm is now crushing and humiliating Russia.[17] For a number of years Napoleon I was completely victorious on the continent; his victory over Prussia was much more decisive than Wilhelm's victory over Russia. Yet after a few years Prussia recovered and in a war of liberation, not without the aid of robber states that waged against Napoleon by no means a war of liberation but an imperialist war, threw off the Napoleonic yoke.

Napoleon's imperialist wars continued for many years, took up a whole epoch and exhibited an extremely complex network of imperialist* relationships interwoven with national liberation movements. And as a result, through all this epoch, unusually rich in wars and tragedies (tragedies of whole peoples), history went forward from feudalism to "free" capitalism.

* I call here imperialism the plunder of foreign countries in general and an imperialist war the war of plunderers for the division of such booty.

History is now advancing still more swiftly, the tragedies of whole nations that are being crushed or have been crushed by imperialist war are immeasurably more terrible. The interweaving of imperialist and national liberation trends, movements and aspirations is also in evidence, with the immense difference that the national liberation movements are immeasurably weaker and the imperialist ones immeasurably stronger. But history goes steadily forward, and in the depths of all the advanced countries there is maturing—despite everything—the socialist revolution, a revolution infinitely deeper, closer to the people and more powerful than the previous bourgeois revolution.

Hence, again and yet again: of all things the most impermissible is despair. The peace terms are intolerably severe. Nevertheless history will come into its own; to our aid will come—even if not so quickly as we should like—the steadily maturing socialist revolution in other countries.

The plunderer has besieged us, oppressed and humiliated us—we are capable of enduring all these burdens. We are not alone in the world. We have friends, supporters, very loyal helpers. They are late—owing to a number of conditions independent of their will—but they will come.

Let us work to organise, organise and yet again organise! The future, in spite of all trials, is ours.

Pravda No. 34,
February 24, 1918

Published according to
the *Pravda* text

SPEECHES AT THE MEETING OF THE C.C. OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) FEBRUARY 24, 1918

MINUTES

1

The question of sending a delegation to Brest to sign the peace treaty was discussed.

Lenin considered that it was necessary to preserve continuity with the preceding delegation and since it would not be enough for Comrade Karakhan to go alone, it was very desirable that Comrades Joffe and Zinoviev should go.

2

A. A. Joffe categorically refused to go, declaring that "concluding peace is the death of the whole Brest policy.

Lenin said that he did not insist on Joffe going as a plenipotentiary for signing the treaty, but he considered Comrade Joffe should go as a consultant. Undoubtedly, the Germans had sent their answer in the form of an ultimatum, fearing opposition on our part, but if they saw our willingness to sign the peace treaty they might agree also to negotiations. In view of this a consultant who knew the whole matter was essential. If it turned out that it was only necessary to sign, then, of course, there would be nothing to talk about, and the consultant would not even appear at the meeting.

3

Lenin said that Radek, though opposed to concluding peace, had nevertheless agreed to go, but the Poles had forbidden him to do so.

4

In further discussion L. D. Trotsky declared that in Brest it would only be necessary to sign the peace treaty and A. A. Joffe would not be necessary there, since in the Germans' reply there was already a formulation on the chief questions.

Lenin considered that he was wrong, since experts were undoubtedly required at the signing of the treaty and we had none, even for a trade treaty. Krasin could have gone, but he had gone to Stockholm for a time. We were going to sign the treaty with clenched teeth, about which the delegation had made its declaration, but we did not know the situation, we did not know what might happen by the time the delegation arrived in Brest, and therefore Joffe as a consultant was essential. In general it must be borne in mind that we empowered the delegation to enter into negotiations if there was any possibility of doing so.

5

In further discussion the candidatures of G. Y. Zinoviev and G. Y. Sokolnikov were put forward.

Lenin considered that both should be sent, and that if it was only a question of signing the peace treaty, they could both leave at once, having reached agreement with Chicherin about further developments.

6

G. Y, Sokolnikov declared that he would not go to Brest and if the Central Committee insisted he would resign from the Central Committee.

Lenin asked the comrades not to get excited and pointed out that Comrade Petrovsky could go in the delegation as People's Commissar.

7

L. D. Trotsky's statement about his resigning the post of People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs was discussed.

Lenin pointed out that this was unacceptable, that a change of policy was a crisis. That a questionnaire on policy had been distributed in the provinces,[18] and that to polemise a little was not at all harmful.

He made a practical proposal: the Central Committee would ask Comrade Trotsky to postpone his statement until the next meeting of the C.C., until Tuesday. (Amendment—until the return of the delegation from Brest.)

8

Lenin proposed that the following declaration should be put to the vote: the C.C., considering it impossible to accept the resignation of Comrade Trotsky at the present time, requests him to postpone his decision until the return of the delegation from Brest or until a change in the actual state of affairs.

Adopted with three abstaining.

9

L. D. Trotsky declared that since his statement had not been accepted he would be compelled to give up appearing in official institutions.

Lenin moved that it should be voted: the Central Committee, having heard Comrade Trotsky's statement, while fully agreeing to Comrade Trotsky's absence during decisions on foreign affairs in the Council of People's Commissars, requests Comrade Trotsky not to keep aloof from other decisions.

Adopted.

10

The C.C. discussed the statement of A. Lomov, M. S. Uritsky, V. M. Smirnov, G. L. Pyatakov, D. P. Bogolepov and A. P. Spunde about their resignation from posts in the Council of People's Commissars. M. S. Uritsky expressed the hope that their statement concerning their resignation from responsible Party and Soviet posts would be published.

Lenin moved that it be adopted: the C.C. requests the comrades who submitted the statement to postpone their

decision until the return of the delegation from Brest and to discuss this decision of the C.C. in the group.

11

Lenin moved two proposals:

1) While recognising the legitimate demand of the four, the C.C. requests them to discuss the proposal of the C.C. and to postpone their statement both in view of the nearness of the Congress and in view of the complexity of the political situation.

2) While guaranteeing the comrades the publication of their statement in *Pravda*, the C.C. requests them to revise their decision and to discuss whether they do not find it possible to remain both in responsible posts and in the C.C.[19]

Lenin's proposals were accepted.

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NOTE ON THE NECESSITY OF SIGNING THE PEACE TREATY

Not to conclude peace at the present moment means declaring an armed uprising or a revolutionary war against German imperialism. This is either phrase-making or a provocation by the Russian bourgeoisie, which is thirsting for the arrival of the Germans. In reality we cannot fight at the present time, for the army is against the war and is unable to fight. The week of war against the Germans, in face of whom our troops simply ran away, from February 18 to 24, 1918, has fully proved this. We are prisoners of German imperialism. Not empty phrases about an immediate armed uprising against the Germans, but the systematic, serious, steady work of preparing a revolutionary war, the creation of discipline and an army, the putting into order of the railways and food affairs. That is the point of view of the majority of the C.E.C., including Lenin (and the majority of the C.C., Bolsheviks), and of Spiridonova and Malkin (the minority of the C.C., Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

Written February 24, 1918

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Published according to the manuscript

POSITION OF THE C.C. OF THE R.S.D.L.P. (BOLSHEVIKS) ON THE QUESTION OF THE SEPARATE AND ANNEXATIONIST PEACE[20]

Dear Comrades,

The Organising Bureau of the Central Committee considers it essential to submit to you an explanation of the motives that led the Central Committee to agree to the peace terms proposed by the German Government. The Organising Bureau is addressing this explanation to you, comrades, in order that all Party members should be thoroughly informed of the point of view of the Central Committee which, in the period between Congresses, represents the entire Party. The Organising Bureau considers it essential to state that the Central Committee was not unanimous on the question of signing the peace terms. Since the decision has been made, however, it must be supported by the whole Party. A Party Congress is due in a few days, and only then will it be possible to decide the question of the extent to which the Central Committee rightly expressed the actual position of the whole Party. Until the Congress, all Party members, in pursuance of their duty to the Party and for the sake of the maintenance of unity in our Party ranks, will carry out the decisions of their central leading body, the Central Committee of the Party.

The absolute necessity of signing, at the given moment (February 24, 1918), an annexationist and unbelievably harsh peace treaty with Germany is due primarily to the fact that we have no army and cannot defend ourselves.

Everybody knows why since October 20, 1917, since the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry, we have all become defencists, we are all for the defence of the fatherland.

From the point of view of defending the fatherland, it is impermissible for us to allow ourselves to be drawn into an armed conflict when we have no army and the enemy is armed to the teeth and excellently prepared.

The Soviet Socialist Republic cannot wage a war when the obviously overwhelming majority of the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers who elect deputies to the Soviets are against the war. It would be a rash gamble. It will be a different thing if an end is put to this war, excessively harsh though the terms of peace may be, and German imperialism again decides to start an aggressive war against Russia. Then the majority of the Soviets will most certainly be in favour of war.

To wage war today would amount objectively to falling for the provocation of the Russian bourgeoisie. They know full well that at the moment Russia is defenceless and would be crushed by even insignificant German forces, which would have only to cut the main railway lines to starve Petrograd and Moscow into surrendering. The bourgeoisie want war, because they want the overthrow of Soviet power and an agreement with the German bourgeoisie. The jubilation of the bourgeoisie when the German troops arrived in Dvinsk and Rezhitsa, Venden and Gapsal, Minsk and Drissa confirms this as clearly as can be.

Defence of revolutionary war at the present moment is nothing but an empty revolutionary phrase. It is impossible for a ruined peasant country to wage a modern war against advanced imperialism without an army and without the most serious economic preparation. It is beyond all doubt that German imperialism must be resisted, for it will crush us and hold us prisoner. It would, however, be empty talk to demand resistance specifically by means of armed uprising, especially now, when *such* resistance is obviously hopeless for us, and obviously to the advantage of the German and Russian bourgeoisie.

It is equally empty talk to argue in favour of revolutionary war at this moment on the grounds of support for the

international socialist movement. If we make it easier for German imperialism to crush the Soviet Republic by our untimely acceptance of battle, we shall harm and not help the German and international working-class movement and the cause of socialism. We must help only the revolutionary internationalists in all countries by all-round, persistent and systematic work; but to undertake the gamble of launching an armed uprising, when it would obviously be a gamble, is unworthy of a Marxist.

If Liebknecht is victorious in two or three weeks (which is possible) he will, of course, get us out of all difficulties. It would, however, be simply foolish and would be turning the great slogan of the solidarity of the working people of all countries into sheer mockery if we were to assure the people that Liebknecht will certainly and unavoidably score victory within the next few weeks. Indeed, by arguing in this way we should be turning the great slogan "We bank on the world revolution" into an empty phrase.

Objectively the situation is similar to that of the summer of 1907. Then, it was the Russian monarchist Stolypin who crushed us and held us prisoner; today it is the German imperialist. Then, the slogan of an immediate insurrection, which, unfortunately, was supported by the entire Socialist-Revolutionary Party, proved to be an empty phrase. Today, at this very moment, the slogan of revolutionary war is obviously an empty phrase that attracts the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who repeat the arguments of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. We are the prisoners of German imperialism and we have ahead of us a long and difficult struggle to overthrow that ringleader of world imperialism; this struggle is undoubtedly the last decisive struggle for socialism, but to begin that struggle at the present moment with an armed uprising against the leader of imperialism would be a gamble that no Marxist would ever undertake.

The systematic, unrelenting, all-round building up of the country's defence potential, self-discipline everywhere, the use of grievous defeat to improve discipline in all spheres of life for the purpose of the country's economic progress and the consolidation of Soviet power—that is the task of the day, that is the way to prepare a revolutionary war in deed and not merely in word.

In conclusion, the Organising Bureau considers it essential to state that, since the offensive of German imperialism has not yet been halted, all members of the Party must organise a concerted opposition to it. If it is impossible to sign a peace treaty, even the harshest, and gain time to prepare for new battles, our Party must emphasise the need to exert every effort for all-out resistance.

If we can gain time, gain even a brief respite for organisational work, we must do our best to get it. If we are granted no deferment our Party must call on the masses to fight, to engage in the most energetic self-defence. We are confident that all Party members will do their duty by the Party, by the working class of their country, by the people and the proletariat. By preserving Soviet power we are rendering the best, the most powerful support to the proletariat of all countries in their incredibly hard struggle against their own bourgeoisie. Today the cause of socialism could suffer no heavier blow than the collapse of Soviet power in Russia.

With comradely greetings,

Organising Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (*Bolsheviks*)

Written February 24, 1918

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Published according to the *Pravda* text

A PAINFUL BUT NECESSARY LESSON

The week from February 18 to 24, 1918, has been one that will be remembered as a great turning-point in the history of the Russian—and the international—revolution.

On February 27, 1917, the Russian proletariat, jointly with part of the peasantry who had been aroused by the course the war was taking, and also with the bourgeoisie, overthrew the monarchy. On April 21, 1917, the proletariat overthrew the absolute rule of the imperialist bourgeoisie and shifted power into the hands of the petty-bourgeois advocates of compromise with the bourgeoisie. On July 3, the urban proletariat gave the compromisers' government a severe shock by its spontaneous demonstration. On October 25, it overthrew that government and established the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry.

This victory had to be defended in civil war. It took about three months, beginning with the victory over Kerensky near Gatchina, continued in the victories over the bourgeoisie, the officer cadets and part of the counter-revolutionary Cossacks in Moscow, Irkutsk, Orenburg and Kiev, and ending with the victory over Kaledin, Kornilov and Alexeyev at Rostov-on-Don.

The fire of proletarian insurrection flared up in Finland, and the conflagration spread to Rumania.

Victories on the home front were achieved with relative ease since the enemy did not possess any material or organisational advantage, and, furthermore, did not have any sound economic basis or any support among the masses. The ease with which these victories were gained was bound to turn the heads of many leaders! Their attitude has been; "We'll have a walk-over."

They have disregarded the widespread disintegration of the army, which is rapidly demobilising itself and abandoning the front. They have become intoxicated with revolutionary phrases. They have applied them to the struggle against world imperialism. They have mistaken Russia's temporary "freedom" from imperialist pressure for something normal, although actually that "freedom" was due only to an interruption in the war between the German and Anglo-French plunderers. They have mistaken the mass strikes that are beginning in Austria and Germany for a revolution that is supposed to have delivered us from any serious danger from German imperialism. Instead of serious, effective, sustained work to aid the German revolution, which is coming to birth in a particularly difficult and painful manner, we have had people waving their arms—"what can those German imperialists do—with Liebknecht on our side we'll kick them out in no time!"

The week from February 18 to February 24, 1918, from the capture of Dvinsk to the capture of Pskov (later recaptured), the week of imperialist Germany's military offensive against the Soviet Socialist Republic, has been a bitter, distressing, and painful lesson, but it has been a necessary, useful and beneficial one. How highly instructive it has been to compare the two groups of telegraphic and telephonic communications that have reached the central government in the past week! On the one hand there has been the unrestrained flood of "resolution-type" revolutionary phrases—one might call them Steinberg phrases, if one recalls a chef-d'oeuvre in that style, the speech of the "Left" (hm ... hm) Socialist-Revolutionary Steinberg at the Saturday meeting of the Central Executive Committee.[21] On the other hand there have been the painful and humiliating reports of regiments refusing to retain their positions, of refusal to defend even the Narva Line, and of disobedience to the order to destroy everything in the event of a retreat, not to mention the running away, the chaos, ineptitude, helplessness and slovenliness.

A bitter, distressing, painful but necessary, useful and beneficial lesson!

The thoughtful, class-conscious worker will draw three conclusions from this historic lesson—on our attitude to the

defence of the fatherland, its defence potential and to socialist revolutionary war; on the conditions under which we may come into collision with world imperialism; on the correct presentation of the question of our attitude to the world socialist movement.

We are and have been defencists since October 25, 1917, we champion the defence of the fatherland ever since that day. That is because we have shown *by deeds* that we have broken away from imperialism. We have denounced and published the filthy, bloodstained treaties of the imperialist plotters. We have overthrown *our own* bourgeoisie. We have given freedom to the peoples *we* formerly oppressed. We have given land to the people and introduced workers' control. We are in favour of defending the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic.

And because we are in favour of defending the fatherland we demand a *serious* attitude towards the country's defence potential and preparedness for war. We declare a ruthless war against revolutionary phrases about revolutionary war. There must be a lengthy, serious preparation for it, beginning with economic progress, the restoration of the railways (for without them modern warfare is an empty phrase) and with the establishment of the strictest revolutionary discipline and self-discipline everywhere.

From the point of view of the defence of the fatherland it would be a crime to enter into an armed conflict with an infinitely superior and well-prepared enemy when we obviously have no army. From the point of view of the defence of the fatherland we have to conclude the most harsh, oppressive, brutal, disgraceful peace—not in order to "capitulate" to imperialism but in order to learn and prepare to fight against imperialism in a serious and effective manner.

The past week has raised the Russian revolution to an immeasurably higher level of historical development. In the course of it history has progressed, has ascended several steps at once.

Until now we have been faced with miserable, despicable (from the standpoint of world imperialism) enemies, an idiot called Romanov, Kerensky the boaster, gangs of officer cadets and bourgeois. Now there has arisen against us the giant of world imperialism, a splendidly organised and technically well-equipped, civilised giant. That giant *must* be

fought. And one must *know how* to fight him. A peasant country that has been subjected to unparalleled devastation by three years of war and that has begun the socialist revolution, must avoid armed conflicts—must avoid them while it is still possible, even at the cost of huge sacrifices—in order to be able to do something worthwhile before the "last, decisive battle" begins.

That battle will begin only when the socialist revolution breaks out in the leading imperialist countries. That revolution is undoubtedly maturing and growing stronger month by month, week by week. That growing strength *must* be helped. And we have to *know how* to help it. It would harm and not help that growing strength if we were to give up the neighbouring Soviet Socialist Republic to destruction at a moment when it obviously has no army.

We must not turn into an empty phrase the great slogan "We bank on the victory of socialism in Europe". It is a true slogan if we have in mind the long and difficult path to the full victory of socialism. It is an indisputable philosophic-historical truth in respect of the entire "era of the socialist revolution". But any abstract truth becomes an empty phrase if it is applied to *any* concrete situation. It is indisputable that "every strike conceals the hydra of the social revolution". But it is nonsense to think that we can stride directly from a strike to the revolution. If we "bank on the victory of socialism in Europe" in the sense that we guarantee to the people that the European revolution will break out and is certain to be victorious within the next few weeks, certainly before the Germans have time to reach Petrograd, Moscow or Kiev, before they have time to "finish off" our railway transport, we shall be acting not as serious internationalist revolutionaries, but as adventurers.

If Liebknecht is victorious over the bourgeoisie in two or three weeks (it is not impossible), he will get us out of all difficulties. That is beyond doubt. If, however, we determine our tactics for today in the struggle against the imperialism of today in the hope that Liebknecht will probably be victorious within the next few weeks, we shall deserve nothing but ridicule. We shall be turning the greatest revolutionary slogans of the present day into an empty revolutionary phrase.

Worker comrades, learn from the painful but useful lessons of the revolution! Prepare seriously, vigorously and unwaveringly to defend the fatherland, to defend the Soviet Socialist Republic!

Pravda (evening edition) No. 35
February 25, 1918
Signed: *Lenin*

Published according to the *Pravda* text

DRAFT DECISION OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON THE EVACUATION OF THE GOVERNMENT[22]

1. Choose Moscow as the seat of government.
2. From each department evacuate the minimum number of leaders of the central administrative body, not more than two or three dozen people (plus families).
3. Whatever happens, immediately remove the State Bank, the gold and the Stationery Office.
4. Begin evacuating Moscow valuables.

Written February 26, 1918
First published in 1929 in *Lenin Miscellany XI*
Published according to the manuscript

STRANGE AND MONSTROUS

The Moscow Regional Bureau of our Party, in a resolution adopted on February 24, 1918, has expressed lack of confidence in the Central Committee, refused to obey those of its decisions "that will be connected with the implementation of the terms of the peace treaty with Austria and Germany", and, in an "explanatory note" to the resolution, declared that it "considers a split in the Party in the very near future hardly avoidable".*

There is nothing monstrous, nor even strange in all this. It is quite natural that comrades who sharply disagree with the Central Committee over the question of a separate peace should sharply condemn the Central Committee and express their conviction that a split is inevitable. All that is the most legitimate right of Party members, which is quite understandable.

But here is what is strange and monstrous. An "explanatory note" is appended to the resolution. Here it is in full:

"The Moscow Regional Bureau considers a split in the Party in the very near future hardly avoidable, and it sets itself the aim of helping to unite all consistent revolutionary communists who equally oppose both the advocates of

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* Here is the full text of the resolution: "Having discussed the activities of the Central Committee, the Moscow Regional Bureau of the R.S.D.L.P. expresses lack of confidence in the Central Committee in view of its political line and composition, and will at the first opportunity insist that a new Central Committee be elected. Furthermore, the Moscow Regional Bureau does not consider itself bound to obey unreservedly those decisions of the Central Committee that will be connected with the implementation of the terms of the peace treaty with Austria and Germany." The resolution was adopted unanimously.

the conclusion of a separate peace and all moderate opportunists in the Party. *In the interests of the world revolution, we consider it expedient to accept the possibility of losing Soviet power, which is now becoming purely formal.* We maintain as before that our primary task is to spread the ideas of the socialist revolution to all other countries and resolutely to promote the workers' dictatorship, ruthlessly to suppress bourgeois counter-revolution in Russia."

It is the words we have stressed in this passage which are—strange and monstrous.

It is in these words that the crux of the matter lies.

These words reduce to an absurdity the whole line put forward by the authors of the resolution. These words expose the root of their error with exceptional clarity.

"In the interests of the world revolution it is expedient to accept the possibility of losing Soviet power...." That is strange, for there is not even any connection between the premises and the conclusion. "In the interests of the world revolution it is expedient to accept the *military defeat* of Soviet power"—such a proposition might be right or wrong, but it could not be called strange. That is the first thing.

Second thing: Soviet power "is now becoming purely formal". Now this is not only strange but downright monstrous. Obviously, the authors have got themselves thoroughly entangled. We shall have to disentangle them.

As regards the first question, the authors' idea evidently is that it would be expedient in the interests of the world revolution to accept the possibility of defeat in war, which would lead to the loss of Soviet power, in other words, to the triumph of the bourgeoisie in Russia. By voicing this idea the authors indirectly admit the truth of what I said in the theses (on January 8, 1918, published in *Pravda* on February 24, 1918),* namely, that refusal to accept the peace terms presented by Germany would lead to Russia's defeat and the overthrow of Soviet power.

And so, *la raison finit toujours par avoir raison*—the truth always triumphs! My "extremist" opponents, the Muscovites who threaten a split, have been obliged—just because they have got to the point of talking openly of a split—to

* See present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 442-50.—*Ed.*

be equally explicit about their *real* reasons, the reasons which people who confine themselves to general phrase-making about revolutionary war prefer to pass over in silence. The very essence of my theses and arguments (as anyone who cares to read attentively my theses of January 7, 1918, may see) is that we must accept this extremely harsh peace *now*, at once, while at the same time seriously *preparing* for a revolutionary war (and accept it, moreover, precisely *in the interest* of such serious preparations). Those who confined themselves to general phrase-making about a revolutionary war ignored or failed to notice, or did not want to notice, the very essence of my arguments. And now it is my "extremist" opponents, the Muscovites, whom I have to thank from the bottom of my heart for having broken the "conspiracy of silence" over the *essence* of my arguments. The Muscovites have been the *first* to reply to them.

And what is their reply?

Their reply is an *admission of the correctness* of my *concrete* argument. Yes, the Muscovites have admitted, we shall certainly be defeated if we fight the Germans now.* Yes, this defeat would certainly lead to the fall of Soviet power.

Again and again I thank my "extremist" opponents, the Muscovites, from the bottom of my heart for having broken the "conspiracy of silence" against the essence of my arguments, i.e., against my *concrete* statement as to what the conditions of war would be, if we were to accept it at once, and for having fearlessly admitted the correctness of my concrete statement.

Further, on what grounds are my arguments, the substantial correctness of which the Muscovites have been compelled to admit, rejected?

On the grounds that in the interests of the world revolution *we must* accept the loss of Soviet power.

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* As to the counter-argument, that to avoid fighting was anyway impossible, the reply has been given by the facts: On January 8 my theses were read; by January 15 we *might* have had peace. A respite would have been certainly assured (and for us even the briefest respite would have been of gigantic significance, both materially and morally, for the *Germans* would have had to declare a *new* war), if ... if it had not been for revolutionary phrase-making.

Why should the interests of the world revolution demand it? This is the crux of the matter; this is the very essence of the reasoning of those who would like to defeat my arguments. And it is on this, the most important, fundamental and vital point, that not a word is said, either in the resolution or in the explanatory note. The authors of the resolution found time and space to speak of what is universally known and indisputable—of "ruthlessly suppressing bourgeois counter-revolution in Russia" (using the methods and means of a policy which would lead to the loss of Soviet power?), and of opposing all moderate opportunists in the Party—but of that which is really disputable and which concerns the very essence of the position of the opponents of peace—not a word!

Strange. Extremely strange. Did the authors of the resolution keep silent about this because they felt that on this point they were particularly weak? To have plainly stated *why* (this is demanded by the interests of the world revolution) would most likely have meant exposing themselves....

However that may be, we have to *seek out* the arguments which *may* have guided the authors of the resolution.

Perhaps the authors believe that the interests of the world revolution forbid making any peace at all with imperialists? This opinion was expressed by some of the opponents of peace at one of the Petrograd meetings, but only an insignificant minority of those who objected to a separate peace supported it.[23] It is clear that this opinion would lead to a denial of the expediency of the Brest negotiations and to a rejection of peace, "even" if accompanied by the return of Poland, Latvia and Courland. The incorrectness of this view (which was rejected, for example, by a majority of the Petrograd opponents of peace) is as clear as day. A socialist republic surrounded by imperialist powers could not, from this point of view, conclude any economic treaties, and could not exist at all, without flying to the moon.

Perhaps the authors believe that the interests of the world revolution require that it should be *given a push*, and that such a push can be given only by war, never by peace, which might give the people the impression that imperialism was being "legitimised"? Such a "theory" would be completely at variance with Marxism, for Marxism has always been

opposed to "pushing" revolutions, which develop with the growing acuteness of the class antagonisms that engender revolutions. Such a theory would be tantamount to the view that armed uprising is a form of struggle which is obligatory always and under all conditions. Actually, however, the interests of the world revolution demand that Soviet power, having overthrown the bourgeoisie in our country, should *help* that revolution, but that it should choose a *form* of help which is commensurate with its own strength. To help the socialist revolution on an international scale by accepting the possibility of defeat of that revolution in *one's own* country is a view that does not follow even from the "pushing" theory.

Perhaps the authors of the resolution believe that revolution has already begun in Germany and has already reached the stage of an open, nation-wide civil war, that we must therefore devote our strength to helping the German workers, and must perish ourselves ("losing Soviet power") to *save* a German revolution which has already started its decisive fight and is being hard pressed? According to this theory, we, while perishing ourselves, would be diverting part of the forces of German counter-revolution, thereby saving the German revolution.

It is quite conceivable that, given these premises, it would not only be "expedient" (as the authors of the resolution put it) but a downright *duty* to accept the possibility of defeat and the possibility of the loss of Soviet power. But obviously these premises do not exist. The German revolution is ripening, but it has obviously not reached the stage of an explosion in Germany, of civil war in Germany. By "accepting the possibility of losing Soviet power", we certainly would not be helping the German revolution to reach maturity, but *would be hindering* it. We would be helping German reaction, playing into its hands, hampering the socialist movement in Germany and frightening away from socialism large masses of German proletarians and semi-proletarians who have not yet come over to socialism and would be scared by the defeat of Soviet Russia, just as the British workers were scared by the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871.

Twist and turn them how you will, but you can find no logic in the authors' contentions. There are no

sensible arguments to support the view that "in the interests of the world revolution it is expedient to accept the possibility of losing Soviet power".

"Soviet power is now becoming purely formal"—this, as we see, is the monstrous view the authors of the Moscow resolution have come to proclaim.

Since the German imperialists are going to make us pay indemnities and forbid us to carry on propaganda and agitation against Germany, Soviet power loses all significance and "becomes purely formal"—this is probably the line of "reasoning" of the authors of the resolution. We say "probably", for the authors offer nothing clear and specific in support of their thesis.

Profound and hopeless pessimism and complete despair—such is the sum and substance of the "theory" that the significance of Soviet power is purely formal, and that tactics which will risk the possible loss of Soviet power are permissible. Since there is no salvation anyway, then let even Soviet power perish—such is the sentiment that dictated this monstrous resolution. The allegedly "economic" arguments in which such ideas are sometimes clothed reveal the same hopeless pessimism: what sort of Soviet republic is it—the implication is—when not just tribute, but tribute on such a scale can be exacted from it?

Nothing but despair: we shall perish anyhow!

It is a quite understandable mood in the extremely desperate situation in which Russia finds herself. But it is not "understandable" among conscious revolutionaries. The typical thing about it is that here we have the views of the Muscovites reduced to absurdity. The Frenchmen of 1793 would never have said that their gains—the republic and democracy—were becoming purely formal and that they would have to accept the possibility of losing the republic. They were not filled with despair, but with faith in victory. To call for a revolutionary war, and at the same time to talk in an official resolution of "accepting the possibility of losing Soviet power", is to expose oneself completely.

Early in the nineteenth century, at the time of the Napoleonic wars, Prussia and a number of other countries suffered incomparably and immeasurably greater hardships and burdens of defeat, conquest, humiliation and oppression on

the part of the conqueror than Russia is suffering in 1918. Yet the best men of Prussia, when Napoleon's military jackboots trampled upon them a hundred times more heavily than we can be trampled upon now, did not despair, and did not say that their national political institutions were "purely formal". They did not give up, did not succumb to the feeling: "We shall perish anyhow." They signed peace treaties infinitely more drastic, brutal, humiliating and oppressive than the Brest Treaty, and then knew how to bide their time; they staunchly bore the conqueror's yoke, fought again, fell under the conqueror's yoke again, again signed the vilest of vile peace treaties, and again rose, and *in the end liberated themselves* (not without exploiting the dissensions among the stronger competing conquerors).

Why shouldn't this be repeated in our history?

Why should we give way to despair and write resolutions—which, by heavens, are more disgraceful than the most disgraceful peace—saying that "Soviet power is becoming purely formal"?

Why shouldn't the most crushing military defeats in the struggle against the giants of modern imperialism steel the national character in Russia, too, strengthen self-discipline, put an end to the bragging and phrase-making, teach fortitude and bring the people round to the correct tactics of the Prussians when they were crushed by Napoleon—the tactics of signing the most humiliating of peace treaties when you haven't an army, then mustering your forces and rising again and again?

Why should we give way to despair at the first peace treaty, incredibly harsh though it be, when other nations were able staunchly to bear even bitterer misfortunes?

Is it the staunchness of the proletarian who knows that one must submit when strength is lacking, and is then nevertheless is able to rise again and again at any price and to build up strength under *all* circumstances, that corresponds to these tactics of despair, or, rather, the spinelessness of the petty bourgeois, who in our country, in the shape of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party, has beaten the record for phrase-making about a revolutionary war?

No, dear Moscow "extremist" comrades, every day of trial will drive away from you those very workers who are

the most class-conscious and the staunchest. Soviet power, they will say, is not *becoming*, and will not *become*, purely formal; and not only now, when the conqueror is in Pskov and is making us pay a ten-thousand-million-ruble tribute in grain, ore and money, but even if he gets as far as Nizhni-Novgorod and Rostov-on-Don and makes us pay a tribute of twenty thousand million rubles.

Never will any foreign conquest render a popular political institution "purely formal" (and Soviet power is *not* only a political institution far and away superior to anything known to history). On the contrary, alien conquest will only strengthen popular sympathy for Soviet power, provided—provided it does not indulge in reckless follies.

And to refuse to conclude even the vilest peace when you have no army would be a reckless gamble, for which the people would be justified in condemning the government that refused to do so.

Immensely more harsh and humiliating peace treaties than the Brest Treaty have been signed before in history (we gave some instances above) without discrediting the regime or turning it into a formality; they ruined neither the regime nor the people, but rather steeled the people, *taught* them the stern and difficult science of building up an effective army even in the most desperate conditions and under the heel of the conqueror.

Russia is making for a new and genuine patriotic war, a war for the preservation and consolidation of Soviet power. It is possible that another epoch will—like the epoch of the Napoleonic wars—be an epoch of liberation *wars* (not one war, but wars) imposed by aggressors upon Soviet Russia. That is possible.

And, therefore, more humiliating than any harsh or even extremely harsh peace, rendered imperative owing to the lack of an army—more humiliating than any humiliating peace is humiliating despair. We shall not perish even from a dozen obnoxious peace treaties if we take revolt and war *seriously*. No conquerors can destroy us if we do not destroy ourselves by despair and phrase-making.

Pravda Nos. 37 and 38,
February 28 and March 1, 1918
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to
the *Pravda* text

ON A BUSINESSLIKE BASIS

We are witnessing an upsurge of revolutionary enthusiasm called forth by the treacherous assault of the German white-guards on the Russian revolution. Telegrams are pouring in from everywhere expressing readiness to rise in defence of Soviet power and to fight to the last man. No other attitude on the part of the workers and peasants towards their own workers' and peasants' power could have been expected.

But enthusiasm alone is not enough for the conduct of war against such an adversary as German imperialism. A frivolous attitude towards this real, stubborn and bloody war would be the sheerest simple-mindedness, even a crime.

War must be waged in earnest, or not waged at all. There can be no middle course. Since the German imperialists are forcing war upon us, it is our sacred duty soberly to weigh our situation, calculate our forces and check up the economic machinery. All this must be done at wartime speed, for any procrastination in our present situation would be truly "similar to death". Hannibal is at the gates—that we must not forget for a single minute.

To wage the war *in earnest* we need a strong and organised rear. Even the best of armies, even people most sincerely devoted to the revolutionary cause will be immediately exterminated by the enemy, if they are not adequately armed, supplied with food and trained. That is so obvious as to need no explanation.

What is the state of the rear of our revolutionary army? Most deplorable, to say the least. The preceding war has utterly disorganised our transport services; exchange between town and countryside has been disrupted, and the direct and immediate result of this is famine in the large cities.

FROM MARX TO MAO
NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

Our army is radically reshaping itself under the blows of the enemy. The old army, which was familiar with conditions of modern warfare, no longer exists. Utterly worn out by the preceding war, and tired to death by three and a half years in the trenches, it is a nonentity as far as its fighting capacity is concerned. The Red Army is undoubtedly splendid fighting material, but raw and unfinished material. In order that it may not become cannon fodder for the German guns, it must be trained and disciplined.

We are facing colossal difficulties. All local Soviets must immediately, following upon their telegrams announcing readiness to fight the external enemy, report how many truckloads of grain they have dispatched to Petrograd, what number of troops they are in a position to send to the front immediately, and how many Red Army men are undergoing training. Stock must be taken of all arms and shells, and the production of new arms and shells must be resumed immediately. The railways must be cleared of bag-traders and hooligans. The strictest revolutionary discipline must be restored everywhere. Only if *all* these conditions are observed can we talk of war *seriously*. Otherwise, all the talk about the "most revolutionary of wars" will be *phrase-making*. And phrase-mongering, which is always harmful, may at this critical juncture play a fatal role.

I am profoundly convinced that our revolution will cope with the colossal difficulties of the moment. It has already performed an immense work, but if our cause is to be successfully accomplished we must multiply our efforts a hundredfold.

Only then shall we win.

Pravda No. 38,
March 1, 1918

Published according to
the *Pravda* text

DRAFT OF AN ORDER TO ALL SOVIETS

We assume that the peace treaty will be signed tomorrow, March 3, but the reports of our agents, taken in connection with all the circumstances, lead us to expect that among the Germans the party of war against Russia will gain the upper hand in the very near future. Hence the categorical order: delay the demobilisation of Red Army men; intensify preparations for blowing up railways, bridges and roads; mobilise and arm detachments; continue accelerated evacuation; withdraw armaments into the interior of the country.

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars
V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*)

Written on March 2, 1918
First published in 1929
in *Lenin Miscellany XI*

Published according to
the manuscript

A SERIOUS LESSON AND A SERIOUS RESPONSIBILITY

Our pseudo-Lefts, who yesterday brought out their own paper, the *Kommunist*[24] (Communist of the pre-Marxian era, one should add), are trying to dodge the lesson and lessons of history, are trying to dodge responsibility.

But they are dodging in vain. They will not succeed in dodging it.

The dodgers are trying their hardest, are filling countless newspaper columns, are sweating and straining, are not sparing "even", as they put it, printer's ink to represent the "breathing-space" "theory" as an unfounded and unsound "theory".

Alas, their efforts are powerless to refute the facts. Facts are stubborn things, as the English proverb rightly says. It is a fact that from March 3, when at 1 p.m. the Germans ceased hostilities, to March 5, at 7 p.m., when I am writing these lines, we have had a breathing-space, and we have *already* made use of these two days for the *businesslike* (as expressed in deeds, not phrase-making) defence of the socialist fatherland. This is a fact which will become more evident to the masses every day. It is a fact that at a moment when the army at the front, being in no condition to fight, is fleeing in panic, abandoning its guns and not even stopping to blow up bridges, the defence of the fatherland and the *raising* of its defensive capacity lie not in babbling about a revolutionary war (to babble in the face of this panic-stricken flight of the army—*not one* detachment of which was *stopped* by the advocates of revolutionary war—is downright shameful), but in retreating in good order, so as to save the remnants of the army, taking advantage of every day's respite for this purpose.

Facts are stubborn things.

Our pseudo-Lefts, in their efforts to dodge the facts, the lessons to be derived from them and the question of responsibility, are endeavouring to *conceal* from their readers the recent, quite fresh and historically important past, and to *gloss it over* by references to the distant and unimportant past. For example, K. Radek; in his article recalls that he wrote about the necessity of helping the army to hold out in December (December, mind you!), in a "memorandum to the Council of People's Commissars". I have not had the opportunity to read this memorandum and I ask myself: why does not Karl Radek print it *in full*? Why does he not explain clearly and frankly what exactly he meant then by a "compromise peace"? Why does he not recall the more recent past, when he wrote in *Pravda* about his illusion (the worst of all illusions) that peace could be concluded with the German imperialists on condition of the restoration of Poland?

Why?

Because the pseudo-Lefts are compelled to gloss over facts which reveal *their*, the "Lefts"', responsibility for sowing illusions which actually *helped* the German imperialists and *hindered* the growth and development of the revolution in Germany.

N. Bukharin is now even attempting to deny the fact that he and his friends asserted that it was impossible for the Germans to attack. But very, very many people know that it is a fact, that Bukharin and his friends did assert this, and that by sowing such an illusion they *helped* German imperialism and *hindered* the growth of the German revolution, which has now been weakened by the fact that the Great-Russian Soviet Republic, during the panic-stricken flight of the peasant army, has been deprived of thousands upon thousands of guns and of wealth to the value of hundreds upon hundreds of millions. I had predicted this definitely and clearly in my theses of January 7.* If N. Bukharin is now compelled to eat his words, so much the worse for him. All who remember that Bukharin and his friends said that it was impossible for the Germans to attack will only shrug

* See present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 442-50.—*Ed.*

their shoulders now that N. Bukharin is compelled to eat his own words.

And for the benefit of those who do not remember them, of those who did not hear them, let us refer to a document which is a little more valuable, interesting and instructive *now* than what K. Radek wrote in December. This document, which unfortunately is being concealed by the "Lefts" from their readers, is the record (1) of the vote on January 21, 1918, at the meeting of the Central Committee of our Party with the present "Left" opposition, and (2) of the vote in the Central Committee on February 17, 1918.

On January 21, 1918, on the question of whether to break off negotiations with the Germans immediately, Stukov alone (of the contributors to the pseudo-Left *Kommunist*) voted *in favour*. All the rest voted against.

On the question of whether it was *permissible* to sign an annexationist treaty if the Germans should break off negotiations or present an ultimatum, only Obolensky (When will "his" theses be published? Why is the *Kommunist* silent about them?) and Stukov voted *against*. All the rest voted *in favour*.

On the question of whether in this event the proposed peace *should* be concluded, only Obolensky and Stukov voted *against*. The rest of the "Lefts" *abstained*!! That is a fact.

On February 17, 1918, when the question was put: who is in favour of a revolutionary war?—Bukharin and Lomov "refused to vote on the question as put". None voted *in favour*. That is a fact!

On the question of whether to "refrain from resuming peace negotiations until the German attack becomes sufficiently (*sic*!) evident and its influence upon the German working-class movement becomes clear", Bukharin, Lomov and Uritsky, of the present contributors to the "Left" paper, voted *in favour*.

On the question, "Should we conclude peace if a German offensive becomes a fact and a revolutionary upsurge fails to eventuate in Germany and Austria?"—Lomov, Bukharin and Uritsky *abstained*.

Facts are stubborn things. And the facts show that Bukharin denied the possibility of a German offensive and sowed illusions by which he *actually*, against his own wishes, *helped*

the German imperialists and *hindered* the growth of the German revolution. That indeed is the essence of revolutionary phrase-making. You strive for one thing and achieve the opposite.

N. Bukharin rebukes me for not giving a concrete analysis of the terms of the present peace. But it should not be difficult to understand that from the point of view of my argument and of the essence of the matter there was not, nor is there now, any necessity for that. It was enough to show that we are facing only one real—not imagined—dilemma: either to accept *such* terms as would afford us a breathing space for a few days at least, or the position of Belgium and Serbia. And this Bukharin did not refute, even in the eyes of Petrograd. That his colleague, M. N. Pokrovsky, admitted.

And if the new terms are worse, more onerous and humiliating than the bad, onerous and humiliating Brest terms, it is *our pseudo-Lefts*, Bukharin, Lomov, Uritsky and Co., who *are to blame for this* happening to the Great-Russian Soviet Republic. This is a historical fact, as is proved by the voting referred to above. It is a fact you cannot escape, wriggle as you will. You were *offered* the Brest terms, and you replied by blustering and swaggering, which *led* to worse terms. That is a fact. And you cannot absolve yourselves of the responsibility for it.

In my theses of January 7, 1918, it was predicted with the utmost clarity that in view of the state of our army (which could not be changed by phrase-making "*against*" the tired peasant masses), Russia *would have* to conclude a *worse* separate peace if she did not accept the Brest peace.

The "Lefts" fell into a trap set by the Russian bourgeoisie, who *had* to embroil us in the *worst* kind of war we could possibly become embroiled in.

That these Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, in declaring for war *now*, have obviously parted company with the peasantry, is a fact. And this fact attests to the *frivolity* of the policy of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, just as the seemingly "revolutionary" policy of all the Socialist-Revolutionaries in the summer of 1907 was frivolous.

That the more class-conscious and advanced workers are quickly shaking off the fumes of revolutionary phrase-making

is shown by the example of Petrograd and Moscow. In Petrograd the best of the workers' districts—Vyborg and Vasilyevsky Island—have already sobered up. The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' Deputies is not in favour of war *now*; they have realised that it is necessary to *prepare* for it, and are preparing for it.[25] In Moscow, at the Bolshevik city conference on March 3 and 4, 1918, the opponents of revolutionary phrase-making won the day.[26]

To what monstrous lengths of self-deception our "Lefts" have gone is evident from one sentence in Pokrovsky's article, which says: "If we are to fight, we must fight *now*" (Pokrovsky's italics), "while" (listen to this!) "the Russian army, including the newly-formed units, has still not been demobilised."

But everybody who does not shut his eyes to the facts knows that the greatest *hindrance* to resisting the Germans in February 1918, whether in Great Russia, the Ukraine, or Finland, was *our undemobilised army*. That is a fact. For it could not help fleeing in panic, carrying the Red Army detachments along with it.

Anyone who wants to benefit by the lessons of history, and not to hide from the responsibility they impose, or shut his eyes to them, let him recall at least the wars of Napoleon I against Germany.

Many a time did Prussia and Germany conclude with the conqueror peace treaties *ten times* more onerous and humiliating (than ours), even to the extent of accepting a foreign police, even to the extent of undertaking to furnish troops to help Napoleon I in his campaigns of conquest. Napoleon I in his treaties with Prussia harassed and dismembered Germany ten times worse than Hindenburg and Wilhelm have pinned us down now. Yet there were people in Prussia who did not bluster, but signed ultra-"disgraceful" peace treaties, signed them because they had no army, signed terms ten times more oppressive and humiliating, and then *in spite of everything* rose up in revolt and to wage war. That happened not once, but many times. History knows of several such peace treaties and wars. Of several cases of respite. Of several new declarations of war by the conqueror. Of several cases of an alliance between an *oppressed* nation and an oppressing nation, which was a rival of the conqueror and

no less a conqueror itself (be it noted by the advocates of a "revolutionary war" *without* accepting aid from imperialists!).

Such was the course of history.

So it was. So it will be. We have entered an epoch of a *succession* of wars. We are moving towards a new, *patriotic* war. We will arrive at that war in the midst of a ripening socialist revolution. And while on that difficult road the Russian proletariat and the Russian revolution will be able to cure themselves of blustering and revolutionary phrase-making, will know how to accept even the most onerous peace treaties, and then rise again.

We have signed a *Tilsit Peace*. We shall attain our victory and our liberation, just as the Germans after the Peace of Tilsit of 1807 attained their liberation from Napoleon in 1813 and 1814. The interval between our Tilsit Peace and our liberation will probably be shorter, for history is moving faster.

Down with blustering! On with the improvement of discipline and organisation in all earnest!

Written on March 5, 1918

Published on March 6, 1918 in *Pravda* No. 42 Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to the manuscript

EXTRAORDINARY SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)[27]

MARCH 6-8, 1918

First published in full in 1923
in the book *Seventh Congress
of the Russian Communist Party.
Verbatim Report. March 6-8, 1918*

Published in 1928 according to the book:
*Minutes of the Congresses
and Conferences
of the All-Union Communist
Party* (*Bolsheviks*).—*Seventh Congress.
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1

POLITICAL REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MARCH 7

A political report might consist of an enumeration of measures taken by the Central Committee; but the essential thing at the present moment is not a report of this kind, but a review of our revolution as a whole; that is the only thing that can provide a truly Marxist substantiation of all our decisions. We must examine the whole preceding course of development of the revolution and ascertain why the course of its further development has changed. There have been turning-points in our revolution that will have enormous significance for the world revolution. One such turning-point was the October Revolution.

The first successes of the February Revolution were due to the fact that the proletariat was followed, not only by the masses of the rural population, but also by the bourgeoisie. Hence, the easy victory over tsarism, something we had failed to achieve in 1905. The spontaneous formation of Soviets of Workers' Deputies in the February Revolution was a repetition of the experience of 1905—we had to proclaim the principle of Soviet power. The masses learned the tasks of the revolution from their own experience of the struggle. The events of April 20-21[28] were a peculiar combination of demonstrations and of something in the nature of armed uprising. This was enough to cause the fall of the bourgeois government. Then began the long period of the collaboration policy, which stemmed from the very nature of the petty-bourgeois government that had come to power. The July events[29] could not then establish the dictatorship of the proletariat—the masses were still not prepared for

it. That was why not one of the responsible organisations called upon them to establish it. But as a reconnoitring operation in the enemy's camp, the July events were of enormous significance. The Kornilov revolt[30] and the subsequent events served as practical lessons and made possible the October victory. The mistake committed by those who even in October wished to divide power[31] was their failure to connect the October victory with the July days, with the offensive, with the Kornilov revolt, etc., etc., events which caused the millions of the common people to realise that Soviet power had become inevitable. Then followed our triumphal march throughout Russia, accompanied by a universal desire for peace. We know that we cannot achieve peace by a unilateral withdrawal from the war. We pointed to this as far back as the April Conference.[32] In the period from April to October, the soldiers clearly realised that the policy of collaboration was prolonging the war and was leading to the savage, senseless attempts of the imperialists to start an offensive and to get still more entangled in a war that would last for years. That was the reason why it was necessary at all costs to adopt an active policy of peace as quickly as possible, why it was necessary for the Soviets to take power into their own hands, and abolish landed proprietorship. You know that the latter was upheld not only by Kerensky but also by Avksentyev, who even went so far as to order the arrest of the members of the Land Committees. The policy we adopted, the slogan of "Power to the Soviets", which we instilled into the minds of the majority of the people, enabled us, in October, to achieve victory very easily in St. Petersburg, and transformed the last months of the Russian revolution into one continuous triumphal march.

Civil war became a fact. The transformation of the imperialist war into civil war, which we had predicted at the beginning of the revolution, and even at the beginning of the war, and which considerable sections of socialist circles treated skeptically and even with ridicule, actually took place on October 25, 1917, in one of the largest and most backward of the belligerent countries. In this civil war the overwhelming majority of the population proved to be on our side, and that is why victory was achieved with such extraordinary ease.

The troops who abandoned the front carried with them wherever they went the maximum of revolutionary determination to put an end to collaboration; and the collaborationist elements, the whiteguards and the landowners' sons found themselves without support among the population. The war against them gradually turned into a victorious triumphal march of the revolution as the masses of the people and the military units that were sent against us came over to the side of the Bolsheviks. We saw this in Petrograd, on the Gatchina front, where the Cossacks, whom Kerensky and Krasnov tried to lead against the Red capital, wavered; we saw this later in Moscow, in Orenburg and in the Ukraine. A wave of civil war swept over the whole of Russia, and everywhere we achieved victory with extraordinary ease precisely because the fruit had ripened, because the masses had already gone through the experience of collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Our slogan "All Power to the Soviets", which the masses had tested in practice by long historical experience, had become part of their flesh and blood.

That is why the Russian revolution was a continuous triumphal march in the first months after October 25, 1917. As a result of this the difficulties which the socialist revolution immediately encountered, and could not but encounter, were forgotten, were pushed into the background. One of the fundamental differences between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution is that for the bourgeois revolution, which arises out of feudalism, the new economic organisations are gradually created in the womb of the old order, gradually changing all the aspects of feudal society. The bourgeois revolution faced only one task—to sweep away, to cast aside, to destroy all the fetters of the preceding social order. By fulfilling this task every bourgeois revolution fulfils all that is required of it; it accelerates the growth of capitalism.

The socialist revolution is in an altogether different position. The more backward the country which, owing to the zigzags of history, has proved to be the one to start the socialist revolution, the more difficult is it for that country to pass from the old capitalist relations to socialist relations. New incredibly difficult tasks, organisational tasks, are added to the tasks of destruction. Had not the popular

creative spirit of the Russian revolution, which had gone through the great experience of the year 1905, given rise to the Soviets as early as February 1917, they could not under any circumstances have assumed power in October, because success depended entirely upon the existence of available organisational forms of a movement embracing millions. The Soviets were the available form, and that is why in the political sphere the future held out to us those brilliant successes, the continuous triumphal march, that we had; for the new form of political power was already available, and all we had to do was to pass a few decrees, and transform the power of the Soviets from the embryonic state in which it existed in the first months of the revolution into the legally recognised form which had become established in the Russian state—i.e., into the Russian Soviet Republic. The Republic was born at one stroke; it was born so easily because in February 1917 the masses had created the Soviets even before any party had managed to proclaim this slogan. It was the great creative spirit of the people, which had passed through the bitter experience of 1905 and had been made wise by it, that gave rise to this form of proletarian power. The task of achieving victory over the internal enemy was an extremely easy one. The task of creating the political power was an extremely easy one because the masses had created the skeleton, the basis of this power. The Republic of Soviets was born at one stroke. But two exceedingly difficult problems still remained, the solution of which could not possibly be the triumphal march we experienced in the first months of our revolution—we did not doubt, we could not doubt, that the socialist revolution would be later confronted with enormously difficult tasks.

First, there was the problem of internal organisation, which confronts every socialist revolution. The difference between a socialist revolution and a bourgeois revolution is that in the latter case there are ready-made forms of capitalist relationships; Soviet power—the proletarian power—does not inherit such ready-made relationships, if we leave out of account the most developed forms of capitalism, which, strictly speaking, extended to but a small top layer of industry and hardly touched agriculture. The organisation of accounting, the control of large enterprises, the transformation of the whole

of the state economic mechanism into a single huge machine, into an economic organism that will work in such a way as to enable hundreds of millions of people to be guided by a single plan—such was the enormous organisational problem that rested on our shoulders. Under the present conditions of labour this problem could not possibly be solved by the "hurrah" methods by which we were able to solve the problems of the Civil War. The very nature of the task prevented a solution by these methods. We achieved easy victories over the Kaledin[33] revolt and created the Soviet Republic in face of a resistance that was not even worth serious consideration; the course of events was predetermined by the whole of the preceding objective development, so that all we had to do was say the last word and change the signboard, i.e., take down the sign "The Soviet exists as a trade union organisation", and put up instead the sign "The Soviet is the sole form of state power"; the situation, however, was altogether different in regard to organisational problems. In this field we encountered enormous difficulties. It immediately became clear to everyone who cared to ponder over the tasks of our revolution that only by the hard and long path of self-discipline would it be possible to overcome the disintegration that the war had caused in capitalist society, that only by extraordinarily hard, long and persistent effort could we cope with this disintegration and defeat those elements aggravating it, elements which regarded the revolution as a means of discarding old fetters and getting as much out of it for themselves as they possibly could. The emergence of a large number of such elements was inevitable in a small-peasant country at a time of incredible economic chaos, and the fight against these elements that is ahead of us, that we have only just started, will be a hundred times more difficult, it will be a fight which promises no spectacular opportunities. We are only in the first stage of this fight. Severe trials await us. The objective situation precludes any idea of limiting ourselves to a triumphal march with flying banners such as we had in fighting against Kaledin. Anyone who attempted to apply these methods of struggle to the organisational tasks that confront the revolution would only prove his bankruptcy as a politician, as a socialist, as an active worker in the socialist revolution.

The same thing awaited some of our young comrades who were carried away by the initial triumphal march of the revolution, when it came up against the second enormous difficulty—the international question. The reason we achieved such an easy victory over Kerensky's gangs, the reason we so easily set up our government and without the slightest difficulty passed decrees on the socialisation of the land and on workers' control, the reason we achieved all this so easily was a fortunate combination of circumstances that protected us for a short time from international imperialism. International imperialism, with the entire might of its capital, with its highly organised war machine, which is a real force, a real stronghold of international capital, could not, under any circumstances, under any conditions, live side by side with the Soviet Republic, both because of its objective position and because of the economic interests of the capitalist class embodied in it, because of commercial connections, of international financial relations. In this sphere a conflict is inevitable. This is the greatest difficulty of the Russian revolution, its greatest historical problem—the need to solve international problems, the need to evoke a world revolution, to effect the transition from our strictly national revolution to the world revolution. This problem confronts us in all its incredible difficulty. I repeat, very many of our young friends who regard themselves as Lefts have begun to forget the most important thing: why in the course of the weeks and months of the enormous triumph after October we were able so easily to pass from victory to victory. And yet this was due only to a special combination of international circumstances that temporarily shielded us from imperialism. Imperialism had other things to bother about besides us. And it seemed to us that we, too, had other things to bother about besides imperialism. Individual imperialists had no time to bother with us, solely because the whole of the great social, political and military might of modern world imperialism was split by internecine war into two groups. The imperialist plunderers involved in this struggle had gone to such incredible lengths, were locked in mortal combat to such a degree, that neither of the groups was able to concentrate any effective forces against the Russian revolution. These were the circumstances in which we found ourselves

in October. It is paradoxical but true that our revolution broke out at so fortunate a moment, when unprecedented disasters involving the destruction of millions of human beings had overtaken most of the imperialist countries, when the unprecedented calamities attending the war had exhausted the nations, when in the fourth year of the war the belligerent countries had reached an impasse, a parting of the ways, when the question arose objectively—could nations reduced to such a state continue fighting? It was only because our revolution broke out at so fortunate a moment as this, when neither of the two gigantic groups of plunderers was in a position immediately either to hurl itself at the other, or to unite with the other against us; our revolution could (and did) take advantage only of a situation such as this in international political and economic relations to accomplish its brilliant triumphal march in European Russia, spread to Finland and begin to win the Caucasus and Rumania. This alone explains the appearance of Party functionaries, intellectual supermen, in the leading circles of our Party who allowed themselves to be carried away by this triumphal march and who said we could cope with international imperialism; over there, there will also be a triumphal march, over there, there will be no real difficulties. This was at variance with the objective position of the Russian revolution which had merely taken advantage of the setback of international imperialism; the engine that was supposed to bear down on us with the force of a railway train bearing down on a wheelbarrow and smashing it to splinters, was temporarily stalled—and the engine was stalled because the two groups of predators had clashed. Here and there the revolutionary movement was growing, but in all the imperialist countries without exception it was still mainly in the initial stage. Its rate of development was entirely different from ours. Anyone who has given careful thought to the economic prerequisites of the socialist revolution in Europe must be clear on the point that in Europe it will be immeasurably more difficult to start, whereas it was immeasurably more easy for us to start; but it will be more difficult for us to continue the revolution than it will be over there. This objective situation caused us to experience an extraordinarily sharp and difficult turn in history.

From the continuous triumphal march on our internal front, against our counter-revolution, against the enemies of Soviet power in October, November and December, we had to pass to a collision with real international imperialism, in its real hostility towards us. From the period of the triumphal march we had to pass to a period in which we were in an extraordinarily difficult and painful situation, one which certainly could not be brushed aside with words, with brilliant slogans—however pleasant that would have been—because in our disorganised country we had to deal with incredibly weary masses, who had reached a state in which they could not possibly go on fighting, who were so shattered by three years of agonising war that they were absolutely useless from the military point of view. Even before the October Revolution we saw representatives of the masses of the soldiers, not members of the Bolshevik Party, who did not hesitate to tell the bourgeoisie the truth that the Russian army would not fight. This state of the army has brought about a gigantic crisis. A small-peasant country, disorganised by war, reduced to an incredible state, has been placed in an extremely difficult position. We have no army, but we have to go on living side by side with a predator who is armed to the teeth, a predator who still remains and will continue to remain a plunderer and is not, of course, affected by agitation in favour of peace without annexations and indemnities. A tame, domestic animal has been lying side by side with a tiger and trying to persuade the latter to conclude a peace without annexations and indemnities, although the only way such a peace could be attained was by attacking the tiger. The top layer of our Party—intellectuals and some of the workers' organisations—has been trying in the main to brush this prospect aside with phrases and such excuses as "that is not the way it should be". This peace was too incredible a prospect for them to believe that we, who up to now had marched in open battle with colours flying and had stormed the enemy's positions with "hurrahs", could yield and accept these humiliating terms. Never! We are exceedingly proud revolutionaries, we declare above all: "The Germans cannot attack."[34]

This was the first argument with which these people consoled themselves. History has now placed us in an extraor-

dinarily difficult position; in the midst of organisational work of unparalleled difficulty we shall have to experience a number of painful defeats. Regarded from the world-historical point of view, there would doubtlessly be no hope of the ultimate victory of our revolution if it were to remain alone, if there were no revolutionary movements in other countries. When the Bolshevik Party tackled the job alone, it did so in the firm conviction that the revolution was maturing in all countries and that in the end—but not at the very beginning—no matter what difficulties we experienced, no matter what defeats were in store for us, the world socialist revolution would come—because it is coming; would mature—because it is maturing and will reach full maturity. I repeat, our salvation from all these difficulties is an all-Europe revolution. Taking this truth, this absolutely abstract truth, as our starting-point, and being guided by it, we must see to it that it does not in time become a mere phrase, because every abstract truth, if it is accepted without analysis, becomes a mere phrase. If you say that every strike conceals the hydra of revolution, and he who fails to understand this is no socialist, you are right. Yes, the socialist revolution looms behind every strike. But if you say that every single strike is an immediate step towards the socialist revolution, you will be uttering perfectly empty phrases. We have heard these phrases "every blessed time in the same place" and have got so sick and tired of them that the workers have rejected these anarchist phrases, because undoubtedly, clear as it is that behind every strike there looms the hydra of socialist revolution, it is equally clear that the assertion that every strike can develop into revolution is utter nonsense. Just as it is indisputable that all the difficulties in our revolution will be overcome only when the world socialist revolution matures—and it is maturing now everywhere—it is absolutely absurd to declare that we must conceal every real difficulty of our revolution today and say: "I bank on the international socialist movement—I can commit any piece of folly I please." "Liebknecht will help us out, because he is going to win, anyhow." He will create such an excellent organisation, he will plan everything beforehand so well that we shall be able to take ready-made forms in the same way as we took the ready-made Marxist doctrine from

Western Europe—and maybe that is why it triumphed in our country in a few months, whereas it has been taking decades to triumph in Western Europe. Thus it would have been reckless gambling to apply the old method of solving the problem of the struggle by a triumphal march to the new historical period which has set in, and which has confronted us, not with feeble Kerensky and Kornilov, but with an international predator—the imperialism of Germany, where the revolution has been maturing but has obviously not yet reached maturity. The assertion that the enemy would not dare attack the revolution was such a gamble. The situation at the time of the Brest negotiations[35] was not yet such as to compel us to accept any peace terms. The objective alignment of forces was such that a respite would not have been enough. It took the Brest negotiations to show that the Germans would attack, that German society was not so pregnant with revolution that it could give birth to it at once; and we cannot blame the German imperialists for not having prepared that outbreak by their conduct, or, as our young friends who regard themselves as Lefts say, for not having created a situation in which the Germans could not attack. When we tell them that we have no army, that we were compelled to demobilise—we were compelled to do so, although we never forgot that a tiger was lying beside our tame, domestic animal—they refuse to understand. Although we were compelled to demobilise we did not for a moment forget that it was impossible to end the war unilaterally by issuing an order to stick the bayonets in the ground.

Generally speaking, how is it that not a single trend, not a single tendency, not a single organisation in our Party opposed this demobilisation? Had we gone mad? Not in the least. Officers, not Bolsheviks, had stated even before October that the army could not fight, that it could not be kept at the front even for a few weeks longer. After October this became obvious to everybody who was willing to recognise the facts, willing to see the unpleasant, bitter reality and not hide, or pull his cap over his eyes, and make shift with proud phrases. We have no army, we cannot hold it. The best thing we can do is to demobilise it as quickly as possible. This is the sick part of the organism, which has suffered incredible torture, has been ravaged by the priva-

tions of a war into which it entered technically unprepared, and from which it has emerged in such a state that it succumbs to panic at every attack. We cannot blame these people who have experienced incredible suffering. In hundreds of resolutions, even in the first period of the Russian revolution, the soldiers have said quite frankly: "We are drowning in blood, we cannot go on fighting." One could have delayed the end of the war artificially, one could have committed the frauds Kerensky committed, one could have postponed the end for a few weeks, but objective reality broke its own road. This is the sick part of the Russian state organism which can no longer bear the burden of the war. The quicker we demobilise the army, the sooner it will become absorbed by those parts that are not so sick and the sooner will the country be prepared for new severe trials. That is what we felt when we unanimously, without the slightest protest, adopted the decision—which was absurd from the point of view of foreign events—to demobilise the army. It was the proper step to take. We said that it was a frivolous illusion to believe that we could hold the army. The sooner we demobilised the army, the sooner would the social organism as a whole recover. That is why the revolutionary phrase, "The Germans cannot attack", from which the other phrase ("We can declare the state of war terminated. Neither war nor the signing of peace.") derived, was such a profound mistake, such a bitter over-estimation of events. But suppose the Germans do attack? "No, they cannot attack." But have you the right to risk the world revolution? What about the concrete question of whether you may not prove to be accomplices of German imperialism when that moment comes? But we, who since October 1917 have all become defencists, who have recognised the principle of defence of the fatherland, we all know that we have broken with imperialism, not merely in word but in deed; we have destroyed the secret treaties,"[36] vanquished the bourgeoisie in our own country and proposed an open and honest peace so that all the nations may see what our intentions really are. How could people who seriously uphold the position of defending the Soviet Republic agree to this gamble, which has already produced results? And this is a fact, because the severe crisis which our Party is now experiencing, owing to the formation

of a "Left" opposition within it, is one of the gravest crises the Russian revolution has experienced.

This crisis will be overcome. Under no circumstances will it break the neck of our Party, or of our revolution, although at the present moment it has come very near to doing so, there was a possibility of it. The guarantee that we shall not break our neck on this question is this: instead of applying the old method of settling factional differences, the old method of issuing an enormous quantity of literature, of having many discussions and plenty of splits, instead of this old method, events have provided our people with a new method of learning things. This method is to put everything to the test of facts, events, the lessons of world history. You said that the Germans could not attack. The logic of your tactics was that we could declare the state of war to be terminated. History has taught you a lesson, it has shattered this illusion. Yes, the German revolution is growing, but not in the way we should like it, not as fast as Russian intellectuals would have it, not at the rate our history developed in October—when we entered any town we liked, proclaimed Soviet power, and within a few days nine-tenths of the workers came over to our side. The German revolution has the misfortune of not moving so fast. What do you think? Must we reckon with the revolution, or must the revolution reckon with us? You wanted the revolution to reckon with you. But history has taught you a lesson. It is a lesson, because it is the absolute truth that without a German revolution we are doomed—perhaps not in Petrograd, not in Moscow, but in Vladivostok, in more remote places to which perhaps we shall have to retreat, and the distance to which is perhaps greater than the distance from Petrograd to Moscow. At all events, under all conceivable circumstances, if the German revolution does not come, we are doomed. Nevertheless, this does not in the least shake our conviction that we must be able to bear the most difficult position without blustering.

The revolution will not come as quickly as we expected. History has proved this, and we must be able to take this as a fact, to reckon with the fact that the world socialist revolution cannot begin so easily in the advanced countries as the revolution began in Russia—in the land of Nicholas

and Rasputin, the land in which an enormous part of the population was absolutely indifferent as to what peoples were living in the outlying regions, or what was happening there. In such a country it was quite easy to start a revolution, as easy as lifting a feather.

But to start without preparation a revolution in a country in which capitalism is developed and has given democratic culture and organisation to everybody, down to the last man—to do so would be wrong, absurd. There we are only just approaching the painful period of the beginning of socialist revolutions. This is a fact. We do not know, no one knows, perhaps—it is quite possible—it will triumph within a few weeks, even within a few days, but we cannot stake everything on that. We must be prepared for extraordinary difficulties, for extraordinarily severe defeats, which are inevitable because the revolution in Europe has not yet begun, although it may begin tomorrow; and when it does begin, then, of course, we shall not be tortured by doubts, there will be no question about a revolutionary war, but just one continuous triumphal march. That is to come, it will inevitably be so, but it is not so yet. This is the simple fact that history has taught us, with which it has hit us very painfully—and it is said a man who has been thrashed is worth two who haven't. That is why I think that now history has given us a very painful thrashing, because of our hope that the Germans could not attack and that we could get everything by shouting "hurrah!", this lesson, with the help of our Soviet organisations, will be very quickly brought home to the masses all over Soviet Russia. They are all up and doing, gathering, preparing for the Congress, passing resolutions, thinking over what has happened. What is taking place at the present time does not resemble the old pre-revolutionary controversies, which remained within narrow Party circles; now all decisions are submitted for discussion to the masses, who demand that they be tested by experience, by deeds, who never allow themselves to be carried away by frivolous speeches, and never allow themselves to be diverted from the path prescribed by the objective progress of events. Of course, an intellectual, or a Left Bolshevik, can try to talk his way out of difficulties. He can try to talk his way out of such

facts as the absence of an army and the failure of the revolution to begin in Germany. The millions-strong masses—and politics begin where millions of men and women are; where there are not thousands, but millions, that is where serious politics begin—the masses know what the army is like, they have seen soldiers returning from the front. They know—that is, if you take, not individual persons, but real masses—that we cannot fight, that every man at the front has endured everything imaginable. The masses have realised the truth that if we have no army, and a predator is lying beside us, we shall have to sign a most harsh, humiliating peace treaty. That is inevitable until the birth of the revolution, until you cure your army, until you allow the men to return home. Until then the patient will not recover. And we shall not be able to cope with the German predator by shouting "hurrah!"; we shall not be able to throw him off as easily as we threw off Kerensky and Kornilov. This is the lesson the masses have learned without the excuses that certain of those who desire to evade bitter reality have tried to present them with.

At first a continuous triumphal march in October and November—then, suddenly, in the space of a few weeks, the Russian revolution is defeated by the German predator; the Russian revolution is prepared to accept the terms of a predatory treaty. Yes, the turns taken by history are very painful. All such turns affect us painfully. When, in 1907, we signed the incredibly shameful internal treaty with Stolypin, when we were compelled to pass through the pigsty of the Stolypin Duma and assumed obligations by signing scraps of monarchist paper,[37] we experienced what we are experiencing now but on a smaller scale. At that time, people who were among the finest in the vanguard of the revolution said (and they too had not the slightest doubt that they were right), "We are proud revolutionaries, we believe in the Russian revolution, we will never enter legal Stolypin institutions." Yes, you will, we said. The life of the masses, history, are stronger than your protestations. If you won't go, we said, history will compel you to. These were very Left people and after the first turn in history nothing remained of them as a group but smoke. Just as we proved able to remain revolutionaries, proved able to work under

terrible conditions and emerge from them, so shall we emerge now because it is not our whim, it is objective inevitability that has arisen in an utterly ruined country, because in spite of our desires the European revolution dared to be late, and in spite of our desires German imperialism dared to attack.

Here one must know how to retreat. We cannot hide the incredibly bitter, deplorable reality from ourselves with empty phrases; we must say: God grant that we retreat in what is half-way good order. We cannot retreat in good order, but God grant that our retreat is half-way good order, that we gain a little time in which the sick part of our organism can be absorbed at least to some extent. On the whole the organism is sound, it will overcome its sickness; But you cannot expect it to overcome it all at once, instantaneously; you cannot stop an army in flight. When I said to one of our young friends, a would-be Left, "Comrade, go to the front, see what is going on in the army", he took offence at this proposal. He said, "They want to banish us so as to prevent our agitating here for the great principles of a revolutionary war." In making this proposal I really had no intention whatever of banishing factional enemies; I merely suggested that they go and see for themselves that the army had begun to run away in an unprecedented manner. We knew that even before this, even before this we could not close our eyes to the fact that the disintegration of the army had gone on to such an unheard-of extent that our guns were being sold to the Germans for a song. We knew this, just as we know that the army cannot be held back, and the argument that the Germans would not attack was a great gamble. If the European revolution is late in coming, gravest defeats await us because we have no army, because we lack organisation, because, at the moment, these are two problems we cannot solve. If you are unable to adapt yourself, if you are not inclined to crawl on your belly in the mud, you are not a revolutionary but a chatterbox; and I propose this, not because I like it, but because we have no other road, because history has not been kind enough to bring the revolution to maturity everywhere simultaneously.

The way things are turning out is that the civil war has begun as an attempt at a clash with imperialism, and this

has shown that imperialism is rotten to the core, and that proletarian elements are rising in every army. Yes, we shall see the world revolution, but for the time being it is a very good fairy-tale, a very beautiful fairy-tale—I quite understand children liking beautiful fairy-tales. But I ask, is it proper for a serious revolutionary to believe in fairy-tales? There is an element of reality in every fairy-tale. If you told children fairy-tales in which the cock and the cat did not converse in human language they would not be interested. In the same way, if you tell the people that civil war will break out in Germany and also guarantee that instead of a clash with imperialism we shall have a field revolution on a world-wide scale,[38] the people will say you are deceiving them. In doing this you will be overcoming the difficulties with which history has confronted us only in your own minds, by your own wishes. It will be a good thing if the German proletariat is able to take action. But have you measured it, have you discovered an instrument that will show that the German revolution will break out on such-and-such a day? No, you do not know that, and neither do we. You are staking everything on this card. If the revolution breaks out, everything is saved. Of course! But if it does not turn out as we desire, if it does not achieve victory tomorrow—what then? Then the masses will say to you, you acted like gamblers—you staked everything on a fortunate turn of events that did not take place, you proved unfitted for the situation that actually arose instead of the world revolution, which will inevitably come, but which has not yet reached maturity.

A period has set in of severe defeats, inflicted by imperialism, which is armed to the teeth, upon a country which has demobilised its army, which had to demobilise. What I predicted has come to pass; instead of the Brest peace we have a much more humiliating peace, and the blame for this rests upon those who refused to accept the former peace. We knew that through the fault of the army we were concluding peace with imperialism. We sat at the table beside Hoffmann and not Liebknecht[39]—and in doing so we assisted the German revolution. But now you are assisting German imperialism, because you have surrendered wealth valued at millions in guns and shells; and anybody who had

seen the state—the incredible state—of the army could have predicted this. Everyone of integrity who came from the front said that had the Germans made the slightest attack we should have perished inevitably and absolutely. We should have fallen prey to the enemy within a few days.

Having been taught this lesson, we shall overcome our split, our crisis, however severe the disease may be, because an immeasurably more reliable ally will come to our assistance—the world revolution. When the ratification of this Peace of Tilsit, this unbelievable peace, more humiliating and predatory than the Brest peace, is spoken of, I say: certainly, yes. We must do this because we look at things from the point of view of the masses. Any attempt to apply the tactics applied internally in one country between October and November—the triumphant period of the revolution—to apply them with the aid of our imagination to the progress of events in the world revolution, is doomed to failure. When it is said that the respite is a fantasy, when a newspaper called *Kommunist*—from the word "Commune", I suppose—when this paper fills column after column with attempts to refute the respite theory, I say that I have lived through quite a lot of factional conflicts and splits and so I have a great deal of experience; and I must say that it is clear to me that this disease will not be cured by the old method of factional Party splits because events will cure it more quickly. Life is marching forward very quickly. In this respect it is magnificent. History is driving its locomotive so fast that before the editors of *Kommunist* bring out their next issue the majority of the workers in Petrograd will have begun to be disappointed in its ideas, because events are proving that the respite is a fact. We are now signing a peace treaty, we have a respite, we are taking advantage of it the better to defend our fatherland—because had we been at war we should have had an army fleeing in panic which would have had to be stopped, and which our comrades cannot and could not stop, because war is more powerful than sermons, more powerful than ten thousand arguments. Since they did not understand the objective situation they could not hold back the army, and cannot do so. This sick army infected the whole organism, and another unparalleled defeat was inflicted upon us. German imperialism struck

another blow at the revolution, a severe blow, because we allowed ourselves to face the blows of imperialism without machine-guns. Meanwhile, we shall take advantage of this breathing-space to persuade the people to unite and fight, to say to the Russian workers and peasants: "Organise self-discipline, strict discipline, otherwise you will have to remain lying under the German jackboot as you are lying now, as you will inevitably have to lie until the people learn to fight and to create an army capable, not of running away, but of bearing untold suffering." It is inevitable, because the German revolution has not yet begun, and we cannot guarantee that it will come tomorrow.

That is why the respite theory, which is totally rejected in the flood of articles in *Kommunist*, is advanced by reality. Everyone can see that the respite is a fact, that everyone is taking advantage of it. We believed that we would lose Petrograd in a few days when the advancing German troops were only a few days' march away, and when our best sailors and the Putilov workers,[40] notwithstanding all their great enthusiasm, remained alone, when incredible chaos and panic broke out, which compelled our troops to flee all the way to Gatchina, and when we had cases of positions being recaptured that had never been lost—by a telegraph operator, arriving at the station, taking his place at the key and wiring, "No Germans in sight. We have occupied the station." A few hours later I received a telephone communication from the Commissariat of Railways informing me, "We have occupied the next station. We are approaching Yamburg. No Germans in sight. Telegraph operator at his post." That is the kind of thing we had. This is the real history of the eleven days' war.[41] It was described to us by sailors and Putilov workers, who ought to be brought to the Congress of Soviets. Let them tell the truth. It is a frightfully bitter, disappointing, painful and humiliating truth, but it is a hundred times more useful, it can be understood by the Russian people.

One may dream about the field revolution on a world-wide scale, for it will come. Everything will come in due time; but for the time being, set to work to establish self-discipline, subordination before all else, so that we can have exemplary order, so that the workers for at least one

hour in twenty-four may train to fight. This is a little more difficult than relating beautiful fairy-tales. This is what we can do today; in this way you will help the German revolution, the world revolution. We do not know how many days the respite will last, but we have got it. We must demobilise the army as quickly as possible, because it is a sick organ; meanwhile, we will assist the Finnish revolution.[42]

Yes, of course, we are violating the treaty; we have violated it thirty or forty times. Only children can fail to understand that in an epoch like the present, when a long painful period of emancipation is setting in, which has only just created and raised the Soviet power three stages in its development—only children can fail to understand that in this case there must be a long, circumspect struggle. The shameful peace treaty is rousing protest, but when comrades from *Kommunist* talk about war they appeal to sentiment and forget that the people are clenching their fists with rage, are "seeing red". What do they say? "A class-conscious revolutionary will never live through this, will never submit to such a disgrace." Their newspaper bears the title *Kommunist*, but it should bear the title *Szlachcic** because it looks at things from the point of view of the *szlachcic* who, dying in a beautiful pose, sword in hand, said: "Peace is disgraceful, war is honourable." They argue from the point of view of the *szlachcic*; I argue from the point of view of the peasant.

If I accept peace when the army is in flight, and must be in flight if it is not to lose thousands of men, I accept it in order to prevent things from getting worse. Is the treaty really shameful? Why, every sober-minded peasant and worker will say I am right, because they understand that peace is a means of gathering forces. History knows—I have referred to it more than once—the case of the liberation of the Germans from Napoleon after the Peace of Tilsit. I deliberately called the peace a Peace of Tilsit although we did not undertake to do what had been stipulated in that treaty, we did not undertake to provide troops to assist the victor to conquer other nations—things like that have happened in history, and will happen to us if we continue

* *Szlachcic*—a Polish nobleman—*Ed.*

to place our hopes in the field revolution on a world-wide scale. Take care that history does not impose upon you this form of military slavery as well. And before the socialist revolution is victorious in all countries the Soviet Republic may be reduced to slavery. At Tilsit, Napoleon compelled the Germans to accept incredibly disgraceful peace terms. That peace had to be signed several times. The Hoffmann of those days—Napoleon—time and again caught the Germans violating the peace treaty, and the present Hoffmann will catch us at it. Only we shall take care that he does not catch us soon.

The last war has been a bitter, painful, but serious lesson for the Russian people. It has taught them to organise, to become disciplined, to obey, to establish a discipline that will be exemplary. Learn discipline from the Germans; for, if we do not, we, as a people, are doomed, we shall live in eternal slavery.

This way, and no other, has been the way of history. History tells us that peace is a respite for war, war is a means of obtaining a somewhat better or somewhat worse peace. At Brest the relation of forces corresponded to a peace imposed upon the one who has been defeated, but it was not a humiliating peace. The relation of forces at Pskov corresponded to a disgraceful, more humiliating peace; and in Petrograd and Moscow, at the next stage, a peace four times more humiliating will be dictated to us. We do not say that the Soviet power is only a form, as our young Moscow friends[43] have said, we do not say that the content can be sacrificed for this or that revolutionary principle. We do say, let the Russian people understand that they must become disciplined and organised, and then they will be able to withstand all the Tilsit peace treaties. The whole history of wars of liberation shows that when these wars involved large masses liberation came quickly. We say, since history marches forward in this way, we shall have to abandon peace for war, and this may happen within the next few days. Everyone must be prepared. I have not the slightest shadow of doubt that the Germans are preparing near Narva, if it is true that it has not been taken, as all the newspapers say; if not in Narva, then near Narva, if not in Pskov, then near Pskov, the Germany are grouping their regular army, making ready

their railways, to capture Petrograd at the next jump. And this beast can jump very well. He has proved that. He will jump again. There is not a shadow of doubt about that. That is why we must be prepared, we must not brag, but must be able to take advantage of even a single day of respite, because we can take advantage of even one day's respite to evacuate Petrograd, the capture of which will cause unprecedented suffering to hundreds of thousands of our proletarians. I say again that I am ready to sign, and that I consider it my duty to sign, a treaty twenty times, a hundred times more humiliating, in order to gain at least a few days in which to evacuate Petrograd, because by that I will alleviate the sufferings of the workers, who otherwise may fall under the yoke of the Germans; by that I facilitate the removal from Petrograd of all the materials, gunpowder, etc., which we need; because I am a defencist, because I stand for the preparation of an army, even in the most remote rear, where our present, demobilised, sick army is being healed.

We do not know how long the respite will last—we will try to take advantage of the situation. Perhaps the respite will last longer, perhaps it will last only a few days. Anything may happen, no one knows, or can know, because all the major powers are bound, restricted, compelled to fight on several fronts. Hoffmann's behaviour is determined first by the need to smash the Soviet Republic; secondly, by the fact that he has to wage war on a number of fronts, and thirdly, by the fact that the revolution in Germany is maturing, is growing, and Hoffmann knows this. He cannot, as some assert, take Petrograd and Moscow this very minute. But he may do so tomorrow, that is quite possible. I repeat that at a moment when the army is obviously sick, when we are taking advantage of every opportunity, come what may, to get at least one day's respite, we say that every serious revolutionary who is linked with the masses and who knows what war is, what the masses are, must discipline the masses, must heal them, must try to arouse them for a new war—every such revolutionary will admit that we are right, will admit that any disgraceful peace is proper, because it is in the interests of the proletarian revolution and the regeneration of Russia, because it will help to get rid of the sick organ. As every sensible man understands, by signing this peace treaty

we do not put a stop to our workers' revolution; everyone understands that by concluding peace with the Germans we do not stop rendering military aid; we are sending arms to the Finns, but not military units, which turn out to be unfit.

Perhaps we will accept war; perhaps tomorrow we will surrender even Moscow and then go over to the offensive; we will move our army against the enemy's army if the necessary turn in the mood of the people takes place. This turn is developing and perhaps much time is required, but it will come, when the great mass of the people will not say what they are saying now. I am compelled to accept the harshest peace terms because I cannot say to myself that this time has arrived. When the time of regeneration arrives everyone will realise it, will see that the Russian is no fool; he sees, he will understand that for the time being we must refrain, that this slogan must be carried through—and this is the main task of our Party Congress and of the Congress of Soviets.

We must learn to work in a new way. That is immensely more difficult, but it is by no means hopeless. It will not break Soviet power if we do not break it ourselves by utterly senseless adventurism. The time will come when the people will say, we will not permit ourselves to be tortured any longer. But this will take place only if we do not agree to this adventure but prove able to work under harsh conditions and under the unprecedentedly humiliating treaty we signed the other day, because a war, or a peace treaty, cannot solve such a historical crisis. Because of their monarchic organisation the German people were fettered in 1807, when after several humiliating peace treaties, which were transformed into respites to be followed by new humiliations and new infringements, they signed the Peace of Tilsit. The Soviet organisation of the people makes our task easier.

We should have but one slogan—to learn the art of war properly and put the railways in order. To wage a socialist revolutionary war without railways would be rank treachery. We must produce order and we must produce all the energy and all the strength that will produce the best that is in the revolution.

Grasp even an hour's respite if it is given you, in order to maintain contact with the remote rear and there create new

armies. Abandon illusions for which real events have punished you and will punish you more severely in the future. An epoch of most grievous defeats is ahead of us, it is with us now, we must be able to reckon with it, we must be prepared for persistent work in conditions of illegality, in conditions of downright slavery to the Germans; it is no use painting it in bright colours, it is a real Peace of Tilsit. If we are able to act in this way, then, in spite of defeats, we shall be able to say with absolute certainty—victory will be ours. (*Applause.*)

2

REPLY TO THE DEBATE ON THE POLITICAL REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MARCH 8

Comrades, let me begin with some relatively minor remarks, let me begin from the end. At the end of his speech Comrade Bukharin went so far as to compare us to Petlyura. If he thinks that is so, how can he remain with us in the same party? Isn't it just empty talk? If things were really as he said, we should not, of course, be members of the same party. The fact that we are together shows that we are ninety per cent in agreement with Bukharin. It is true he added a few revolutionary phrases about our wanting to betray the Ukraine. I am sure it is not worth while talking about such obvious nonsense. I shall return to Comrade Ryazanov, and here I want to say that in the same way as an exception that occurs once in ten years proves the rule, so has Comrade Ryazanov chanced to say a serious word. (*Applause*.) He said that Lenin was surrendering space to gain time. That is almost philosophical reasoning. This time it happened that we heard from Comrade Ryazanov a serious phrase—true it is only a phrase—which fully expresses the case; to gain time I want to surrender space to the actual victor. That and that alone is the whole point at issue. All else is mere talk—the need for a revolutionary war, rousing the peasantry, etc. When Comrade Bukharin pictures things as though there could not be two opinions as to whether war is possible and says—"ask any soldier" (I wrote down his actual words)—since he puts the question this way and wants to ask any soldier, I'll answer him. "Any soldier" turned out to be a French officer that I had a talk with. That French

officer looked at me, with anger in his eyes, of course—had I not sold Russia to the Germans?—and said: "I am a royalist, I am also a champion of the monarchy in France, a champion of the defeat of Germany, so don't think I support Soviet power—who would, if he was a royalist?—but I favour your signing the Brest Treaty because it's necessary."[44] That's "asking any soldier" for you. Any soldier would say what I have said—we had to sign the Brest Treaty. If it now emerges from Bukharin's speech that our differences have greatly diminished, it is only because his supporters have concealed the chief point on which we differ.

Now that Bukharin is thundering against us for having demoralised the masses, he is perfectly correct, except that it is himself and not us that he is attacking. Who caused this mess in the Central Committee?—You, Comrade Bukharin. (*Laughter.*) No matter how much you shout "No", the truth will out; we are here in our own comradely family, we are at our own Congress, we have nothing to hide, the truth must be told. And the truth is that there were three trends in the Central Committee. On February 17 Lomov and Bukharin did not vote. I have asked for the record of the voting to be reproduced and copies made so that every Party member who wishes to do so can go into the secretariat and see how people voted—the historic voting of January 21, which shows that they wavered and we did not, not in the least; we said, "Let us accept the Brest peace—you'll get nothing better—so as to prepare for a revolutionary war". Now we have gained five days in which to evacuate Petrograd. Now the manifesto signed by Krylenko and Podvoisky[45] has been published, they were not among the Lefts, and Bukharin insulted them by saying that Krylenko had been "dragged in", as though we had invented what Krylenko reported. We agree in full with what they said; that is how matters stand, for it was these army men who gave proof of what I had said; and you dismiss the matter by saying the Germans won't attack. How can this situation be compared with October, when the question of equipment did not arise? If you want to take facts into consideration, then consider this one—that the disagreement arose over the statement that we cannot start a war that is obviously to our disadvantage. When Comrade Bukharin began his concluding speech with the thunderous

question "Is war possible in the near future?" he greatly surprised me. I answer without hesitation—yes, it is possible, but today we must accept peace. There is no contradiction in this.

After these brief remarks I shall give detailed answers to previous speakers. As far as Radek is concerned I must make an exception. But there was another speech, that of Comrade Uritsky. What was there in that speech apart from Canossa,[46] "treachery", "retreated", "adapted"? What is all this about? Haven't you borrowed your criticism from a Left Socialist-Revolutionary newspaper? Comrade Bubnov read us a statement submitted to the Central Committee by those of its members who consider themselves very Left-wing and who gave us a striking example of a demonstration before the eyes of the whole world—"the behaviour of the Central Committee strikes a blow at the international proletariat". Is that anything but an empty phrase? "Demonstrate weakness before the eyes of the whole world!" How are we demonstrating? By proposing peace? Because our army has run away? Have we not proved that to begin war with Germany at this moment, and not to accept the Brest peace, would mean showing the world that our army is sick and does not want to give battle? Bubnov's statement was quite empty when he asserted that the wavering was entirely of our making—it was due to our army's being sick. Sooner or later, there had to be a respite. If we had had the correct strategy we should have had a month's breathing-space, but since your strategy was incorrect we have only five days—even that is good. The history of war shows that even days are sometimes enough to halt a panic-stricken army. Anyone who does not accept, does not conclude this devilish peace now, is a man of empty phrases and not a strategist. That is the pity of it. When Central Committee members write to me about "demonstrations of weakness", "treachery", they are writing the most damaging, empty, childish phrases. We demonstrated our weakness by attempting to fight at a time when the demonstration should not have been made, when an offensive against us was inevitable. As for the peasants of Pskov, we shall bring them to the Congress of Soviets to relate how the Germans treat people, so that they can change the mood of the soldier in panic-

stricken night and he will begin to recover from his panic and say, "This is certainly not the war the Bolsheviks promised to put an end to, this is a new war the Germans are waging against Soviet power." Then recovery will come. But you raise a question that cannot be answered. Nobody knows how long the respite will last.

Now I must say something about Comrade Trotsky's position. There are two aspects to his activities; when he began the negotiations at Brest and made splendid use of them for agitation, we all agreed with Comrade Trotsky. He has quoted part of a conversation with me, but I must add that it was agreed between us that we would hold out until the Germans presented an ultimatum, and then we would give way. The Germans deceived us—they stole five days out of seven from us.[47] Trotsky's tactics were correct as long as they were aimed at delaying matters; they became incorrect when it was announced that the state of war had been terminated but peace had not been concluded. I proposed quite definitely that peace be concluded. We could not have got anything better than the Brest peace. It is now clear to everybody that we would have had a month's respite and that we would not have lost anything. Since history has swept that away it is not worth recalling, but it is funny to hear Bukharin say, "Events will show that we were right." I was right because I wrote about it back in 1915—"We must prepare to wage war, it is inevitable, it is coming, it will come."* But we had to accept peace and not try vain blustering. And because war is coming, it was all the more necessary to accept peace, and now we are at least making easier the evacuation of Petrograd—we have made it, easier. That is a fact. And when Comrade Trotsky makes fresh demands; "Promise not to conclude peace with Vinnichenko", I say that under no circumstances will I take that obligation upon myself.[48] If the Congress accepts this obligation, neither I, nor those who agree with me, will accept responsibility for it. It would mean tying our hands again with a formal decision instead of following a clear line of manoeuvre—retreat when possible, and at times attack. In war you must never

* See present edition, Vol. 21, p. 404.—*Ed.*

tie yourself down with formal decisions. It is ridiculous not to know the history of war, not to know that a treaty is a means of gathering strength—I have already mentioned Prussian history. There are some people who are just like children, they think that if we have signed a treaty we have sold ourselves to Satan and have gone to hell. That is simply ridiculous when it is quite obvious from the history of war that the conclusion of a treaty after defeat is a means of gathering strength. There have been cases in history of one war following immediately after another, we have all forgotten that, we see that the old war is turning into....* If you like, you can bind yourselves for ever with formal decisions and then hand over all the responsible posts to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.[49] We shall not accept responsibility for it. There is not the least desire for a split here. I am sure that events will teach you—March 12 is not far away, and you will obtain plenty of material.[50]

Comrade Trotsky says that it will be treachery in the full sense of the word. I maintain that that is an absolutely wrong point of view. To demonstrate this concretely, I will give you an example: two men are walking together and are attacked by ten men, one fights and the other runs away—that is treachery; but suppose we have two armies of a hundred thousand each and there are five armies against them; one army is surrounded by two hundred thousand, and the other must go to its aid; knowing that the other three hundred thousand of the enemy are ambushed to trap it, should the second army go to the aid of the first? It should not. That is not treachery, that is not cowardice; a simple increase in numbers has changed all concepts, any soldier knows this; it is no longer a personal concept. By acting in this way I preserve my army; let the other army be captured, I shall be able to renew mine, I have allies, I shall wait till the allies arrive. That is the only way to argue; when military arguments are mixed up with others, you get nothing but empty phrases. That is not the way to conduct politics.

We have done everything that could be done. By signing the treaty we have saved Petrograd, even if only for a few

* Several words are missing in the verbatim report.—*Ed.*

days. (The secretaries and stenographers should not think of putting that on record.) The treaty requires us to withdraw our troops from Finland, troops that are clearly no good, but we are not forbidden to take arms into Finland. If Petrograd had fallen a few days ago, the city would have been in a panic and we should not have been able to take anything away; but in those five days we have helped our Finnish comrades—how much I shall not say, they know it themselves.

The statement that we have betrayed Finland is just a childish phrase. We helped the Finns precisely by retreating before the Germans in good time. Russia will never perish just because Petrograd falls. Comrade Bukharin is a thousand times right in that, but if we manoeuvre in Bukharin's way we may ruin a good revolution. (*Laughter.*)

We have not betrayed either Finland or the Ukraine. No class-conscious worker would accuse us of this. We are helping as best we can. We have not taken one good man away from our army and shall not do so. You say that Hoffmann will catch us—of course he may, I do not doubt it, but how many days it will take him, he does not know and nobody knows. Furthermore, your arguments about his catching us are arguments about the political alignment of forces, of which I shall speak later.

Now that I have explained why I am absolutely unable to accept Trotsky's proposal—you cannot conduct politics in that way—I must say that Radek has given us an example of how far the comrades at our Congress have departed from empty phrases such as Uritsky still sticks to. I certainly cannot accuse him of empty phrases in that speech. He said, "There is not a shadow of treachery, not a shadow of disgrace, because it is clear that you retreated in the face of overpowering military force." That is an appraisal that destroys Trotsky's position. When Radek said, "We must grit our teeth and prepare our forces," he was right—I agree with that in full—don't bluster, grit your teeth and make preparations.

Grit your teeth, don't bluster and muster your forces. The revolutionary war will come, there is no disagreement on this; the difference of opinion is on the Peace of Tilsit—should we conclude it or not? The worst of it is that we have a

sick army, and the Central Committee, therefore, must have a firm line and not differences of opinion or the middle line that Comrade Bukharin also supported. I am not painting the respite in bright colours; nobody knows how long it will last and I don't know. The efforts that are being made to force me to say how long it will last are ridiculous. As long as we hold the main lines we are helping the Ukraine and Finland. We are taking advantage of the respite, manoeuvring and retreating.

The German worker cannot now be told that the Russians are being awkward, for it is now clear that German and Japanese imperialism is attacking—it will be clear to everybody; apart from a desire to strangle the Bolsheviks, the Germans also want to do some strangling in the West, everything is all mixed up, and in this war we shall have to and must be able to manoeuvre.

With regard to Comrade Bukharin's speech, I must say that when he runs short of arguments he puts forward something in the Uritsky manner and says, "The treaty disgraces us." Here no arguments are needed; if we have been disgraced we should collect our papers and run, but, although we have been "disgraced", I do not think our position has been shaken. Comrade Bukharin attempted to analyse the class basis of our position, but instead of doing so told us an anecdote about a deceased Moscow economist. When you discovered some connection between our tactics and food speculation—this was really ridiculous—you forgot that the attitude of the class as a whole, the class, and not the food speculators, shows that the Russian bourgeoisie and their hangers-on—the *Dyelo Naroda* and *Novaya Zhizn* writers—are bending all their efforts to goad us on to war. You do not stress that class fact. To declare war on Germany at the moment would be to fall for the provocation of the Russian bourgeoisie. That is not new because it is the surest—I do not say absolutely certain, because nothing is absolutely certain—the surest way of getting rid of us today. When Comrade Bukharin said that events were on their side, that in the long run we would recognise revolutionary war, he was celebrating an easy victory since we prophesied the inevitability of a revolutionary war in 1915. Our differences were on the following—would the Germans attack or not;

that we should have declared the state of war terminated; that in the interests of revolutionary war we should have to retreat, surrendering territory to gain time. Strategy and politics prescribe the most disgusting peace treaty imaginable. Our differences will all disappear once we recognise these tactics.

3

RESOLUTION ON WAR AND PEACE[51]

The Congress recognises the necessity to confirm the extremely harsh, humiliating peace treaty with Germany that has been concluded by Soviet power in view of our lack of an army, in view of the most unhealthy state of the demoralised army at the front, in view of the need to take advantage of any, even the slightest, possibility of obtaining a respite before imperialism launches its offensive against the Soviet Socialist Republic.

In the present period of the era that has begun, the era of the socialist revolution, numerous military attacks on Soviet Russia by the imperialist powers (both from the West and from the East) are historically inevitable. The historical inevitability of such attacks at a time when both internal, class relations and international relations are extremely tense, can at any moment, even immediately, within the next few days, lead to fresh imperialist aggressive wars against the socialist movement in general and against the Russian Socialist Soviet Republic in particular.

The Congress therefore declares that it recognises the primary and fundamental task of our Party, of the entire vanguard of the class-conscious proletariat and of Soviet power, to be the adoption of the most energetic, ruthlessly determined and Draconian measures to improve the self-discipline and discipline of the workers and peasants of Russia, to explain the inevitability of Russia's historic advance towards a socialist, patriotic war of liberation, to create everywhere soundly co-ordinated mass organisations held together by a single iron will, organisations that are capable of concerted, valorous action in their day-to-day efforts and especially

at critical moments in the life of the people, and, lastly, to train systematically and comprehensively in military matters and military operations the entire adult population of both sexes.

The Congress considers the only reliable guarantee of consolidation of the socialist revolution that has been victorious in Russia to be its conversion into a world working-class revolution.

The Congress is confident that the step taken by Soviet power in view of the present alignment of forces in the world arena was, from the standpoint of the interests of the world revolution, inevitable and necessary.

Confident that the working-class revolution is maturing persistently in all belligerent countries and is preparing the full and inevitable defeat of imperialism, the Congress declares that the socialist proletariat of Russia will support the fraternal revolutionary movement of the proletariat of all countries with all its strength and with every means at its disposal.

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4

SPEECHES AGAINST TROTSKY'S AMENDMENTS TO THE RESOLUTION ON WAR AND PEACE[52] MARCH 8 (MORNING)

I

Comrades, in my speech I have already said that neither I nor those who support me consider it possible to accept this amendment. We must in no way bind our hands in any strategic manoeuvre. Everything depends on the relationship of forces and the time of the attack against us by these or those imperialist countries, the time when the rehabilitation of our army, which is undoubtedly beginning reaches the point when we shall be in a position and obliged not merely to refrain from concluding peace but to declare war. Instead of the amendments which Comrade Trotsky proposes, I am ready to accept the following:

First, to say—and this I shall certainly uphold—that the present resolution is not to be published in the press but that a communication should be made only about the ratification of the treaty.

Secondly, in the forms of publication and content the Central Committee shall have the right to introduce changes in connection with a possible offensive by the Japanese.

Thirdly, to say that the Congress will empower the C.C. of the Party both to break all the peace treaties and to declare war on any imperialist power or the whole world when the C.C. of the Party considers that the appropriate moment for this has come.

We must give the C.C. full power to break the treaties at any moment but this does not in any way imply that we shall break them just now, in the situation that exists today.

At the present time we must not bind our hands in any way. The words that Comrade Trotsky proposes to introduce will gain the votes of those who are against ratification in general, votes for a middle course which will create afresh a situation in which not a single worker, not a single soldier, will understand anything in our resolution.

At the present time we shall endorse the necessity of ratifying the treaty and we shall empower the Central Committee to declare war at any moment, because an attack against us is being prepared, perhaps from three sides; Britain or France wants to take Archangel from us—it is quite possible they will, but in any case we ought not to hamper our central institution in any way, whether in regard to breaking the peace treaty or in regard to declaring war. We are giving financial aid to the Ukrainians, we are helping them in so far as we can. In any case we must not bind ourselves to not signing any peace treaty. In an epoch of growing wars, coming one after the other, new combinations grow up. The peace treaty is entirely a matter of vital manoeuvring—either we stand by this condition of manoeuvring or we formally bind our hands in advance in such a way that it will be impossible to move; neither making peace nor waging war will be possible.

II

It seems to me that I have said: no, I cannot accept this. This amendment makes a hint, it expresses what Comrade Trotsky wants to say. There should be no hints in the resolution.

The first point says that we accept ratification of the treaty, considering it essential to utilise every, even the smallest, possibility of a breathing-space before imperialism attacks the Soviet Socialist Republic. In speaking of a breathing-space, we do not forget that an attack on our Republic is still going on. There you have my opinion, which I stressed in my reply to the debate.

5

SPEECH AGAINST THE STATEMENT OF THE "LEFT COMMUNIST" GROUP IN SUPPORT OF TROTSKY'S AMENDMENT MARCH 8

I am unable to give an immediate answer to Comrade Radek's polemic[53]—since I am not voting, I cannot give grounds for my vote. According to the usual procedure, I cannot reply; I do not want to hold up the Congress by requesting to be given the floor in order to reply to this polemic. I merely remind you, therefore, of what was said in my reply to the debate and, secondly, register my protest against a speech on grounds for voting being turned into a polemic to which I am not in a position to reply.

6

ADDENDUM TO THE RESOLUTION ON WAR AND PEACE MARCH 8

The Congress deems it essential not to publish the resolution that has been adopted and requires of all Party members that they keep this resolution secret. The only communication to be made to the press—and that not today but on the instructions of the Central Committee—will be that the Congress is in favour of ratification.

Furthermore, the Congress lays special stress on the authority granted to the Central Committee to denounce at any moment all peace treaties concluded with imperialist and bourgeois states, and also to declare war on them.

Published according to the manuscript

7

SPEECH AGAINST ZINOVIEV'S AMENDMENT TO THE ADDENDUM TO THE RESOLUTION ON WAR AND PEACE MARCH 8

I think, comrades, that there is no need for this amendment which Comrade Zinoviev has moved.[54] I hope that only members of the Party are in the hall; in view of the state importance of the question, I think that we can adopt a decision to take the personal signature of everyone present in this hall.

This is by no means a superfluous measure; we are in conditions in which military secrets become very important questions, the most essential questions, for the Russian Republic. If we say in the press that the Congress has decided on ratification there cannot be any misunderstanding. I only propose that this should not be voted on just now because there may be changes: further information should reach us today. We have taken special measures to obtain information from the North-East and the South—this news may cause some change. Since the Congress agrees that we must manoeuvre in the interests of a revolutionary war—will even empower the Central Committee to declare war—it is obvious that we have the agreement of both sections of the Party on this; the dispute was only over whether or not to continue the war without any respite. I consider that in moving this amendment I am saying something indisputable for the majority and for the opposition; I think that there cannot be any other interpretations. I consider it more practical merely to confirm that it must be kept secret. And in addition, to adopt supplementary measures and on this account to take the personal signature of each person present in the hall.

8

PROPOSAL CONCERNING THE RESOLUTION ON WAR AND PEACE MARCH 8

I

In view of the fact that the resolution has been distributed, can we not at once adopt a decision that everyone who has received a copy should bring it to this table immediately? That is one means of preserving a military secret.

II

I ask for the vote to be taken. Our Party centres consist of adult people who will understand that communications containing a military secret are made orally. Therefore I absolutely insist that all texts of the resolution in anyone's possession shall immediately be put on the table here.

9

REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME AND ON CHANGING THE NAME OF THE PARTY[55] MARCH 8

Comrades, as you know, a fairly comprehensive Party discussion on changing the name of the Party has developed since April 1917 and the Central Committee has therefore been able to arrive at an immediate decision that will probably not give rise to considerable dispute—there may even be practically none at all; the Central Committee proposes to you that the name of our Party be changed to the Russian Communist Party, with the word "Bolsheviks" added to it in brackets. We all recognise the necessity for this addition because the word "Bolshevik" has not only acquired rights of citizenship in the political life of Russia but also throughout the entire foreign press, which in a general way keeps track of events in Russia. It has already been explained in our press that the name "Social-Democratic Party" is scientifically incorrect. When the workers set up their own state they realised that the old concept of democracy—bourgeois democracy—had been surpassed in the process of the development of our revolution. We have arrived at a type of democracy that has never existed anywhere in Western Europe. It has its prototype only in the Paris Commune, and Engels said with regard to the Paris Commune that it was not a state in the proper sense of the word.[56] In short, since the working people themselves are undertaking to administer the state and establish armed forces that support the given state system, the special government apparatus is disappearing, the special apparatus for a certain state coercion is disappearing, and we cannot therefore uphold democracy in its old form.

On the other hand, as we begin socialist reforms we must have a clear conception of the goal towards which these reforms are in the final analysis directed, that is, the creation of a communist society that does not limit itself to the expropriation of factories, the land and the means of production, does not confine itself to strict accounting for, and control of, production and distribution of products, but goes farther towards implementing the principle "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs". That is why the name of Communist Party is the only one that is scientifically correct. The objection that it may cause us to be confused with the anarchists was immediately rejected by the Central Committee on the grounds that the anarchists never call themselves simply Communists but always add something to that name. In this respect we may mention the many varieties of socialism, but they do not cause the confusion of the Social-Democrats with social-reformers, or national socialists, or any similar parties.

On the other hand, the most important argument in favour of changing the name of the Party is that up to now the old official socialist parties in all the leading European countries have still not got rid of their intoxication with social-chauvinism and social-patriotism that led to the complete collapse of European official socialism during the present war, so that up to now almost all official socialist parties have been a real hindrance to the working-class revolutionary socialist movement, a real encumbrance to it. And our Party, which at the present time undoubtedly enjoys the greatest sympathy of the masses of the working people of all countries—our Party must make the most decisive, sharp, clear and unambiguous statement that is possible to the effect that it has broken off connections with that old official socialism, for which purpose a change in the name of the Party will be the most effective means.

Further, comrades, the much more difficult question was that of the theoretical part of the Programme and of its practical and political part. As far as the theoretical part of the Programme is concerned, we have some material—the Moscow and Petrograd symposia on the review of the Programme, which have been published[57]; the two main theoretical organs of our Party, *Prosveshcheniye*[58] published

in Petrograd, and *Spartak*[59] published in Moscow, have carried articles substantiating certain trends in changing the theoretical part of the Programme of our Party. In this sphere we have a certain amount of material. Two main points of view are to be seen which, in my opinion, do not diverge, at any rate radically, on matters of principle; one point of view, the one I defended, is that we have no reason to reject the old theoretical part of our Programme, and that it would be actually incorrect to do so. We have only to add to it an analysis of imperialism as the highest stage of the development of capitalism and also an analysis of the era of the socialist revolution, proceeding from the fact that the era of the socialist revolution has begun. Whatever may be the fate of our revolution, of our contingent of the international proletarian army, whatever may be the future complications of the revolution, the objective situation of the imperialist countries embroiled in a war that has reduced the most advanced countries to starvation, ruin and barbarity, that situation, in any case, is hopeless. And here I must repeat what Frederick Engels said thirty years ago, in 1887, when appraising the probable prospects of a European war. He said that crowns would lie around in Europe by the dozen and nobody would want to pick them up; he said that incredible ruin would fall to the lot of the European countries, and that there could be only one outcome to the horrors of a European war—he put it this way—"either the victory of the working class or the creation of conditions that would make that victory possible and necessary".[60] Engels expressed himself on this score with exceptional precision and caution. Unlike those people who distort Marxism and offer their belated pseudo-philosophising about socialism being impossible in conditions of ruin, Engels realised full well that every war, even in an advanced society, would create not only devastation, barbarity, torment, calamities for the masses, who would drown in blood, and that there could be no guarantee that it would lead to the victory of socialism; he said it would be "either the victory of the working class or the creation of conditions that would make that victory possible and necessary", i.e., that there was, consequently, the possibility of a number of difficult stages of transition in view of the tremendous

destruction of culture and the means of production, but that the result could be only the rise of the working class, the vanguard of all working people, and the beginning of its taking over power into its own hands for the creation of a socialist society. For no matter to what extent culture has been destroyed, it cannot be removed from history; it will be difficult to restore but no destruction will ever mean the complete disappearance of that culture. Some part of it, some material remains of that culture will be indestructible, the difficulties will be only in restoring it. There you have one point of view—that we must retain the old Programme and add to it an analysis of imperialism and of the beginning of the social revolution.

I expressed that point of view in the draft Programme that I have published.* Another draft was published by Comrade Sokolnikov in the Moscow symposium. The second point of view has been expressed in our private conversations, in particular by Comrade Bukharin, and by Comrade V. Smirnov in the press, in the Moscow symposium. This point of view is that the old theoretical part of our Programme should be completely or almost completely eliminated and replaced by a new part that does not analyse the development of commodity production and capitalism, as the present Programme does, but analyses the contemporary, highest stage of capitalist development—imperialism—and the immediate transition to the epoch of the social revolution. I do not think that these two points of view diverge radically and in principle, but I shall defend my point of view. It seems to me that it would be theoretically incorrect to eliminate the old programme that analyses the development from commodity production to capitalism. There is nothing incorrect in it. That is how things were and how they are, for commodity production begot capitalism and capitalism led to imperialism. Such is the general historical perspective, and the fundamentals of socialism should not be forgotten. No matter what the further complications of the struggle may be, no matter what occasional zigzags we may have to contend with (there will be very many of them—we have seen from experience what gigantic turns the history

* See present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 459-63.—*Ed.*

of the revolution has made, and so far it is only in our own country; matters will be much more complicated and proceed much more rapidly, the rate of development will be more furious and the turns will be more intricate when the revolution becomes a European revolution)—in order not to lose our way in these zigzags, these sharp turns in history, in order to retain the general perspective, to be able to see the scarlet thread that joins up the entire development of capitalism and the entire road to socialism, the road we naturally imagine as straight, and which we must imagine as straight in order to see the beginning, the continuation and the end—in real life it will never be straight, it will be incredibly involved —in order not to lose our way in these twists and turns, in order not to get lost at times when we are taking steps backward, times of retreat and temporary defeat or when history or the enemy throws us back—in order not to get lost, it is, in my opinion, important not to discard our old, basic Programme; the only theoretically correct line is to retain it. Today we have reached only the first stage of transition from capitalism to socialism here in Russia. History has not provided us with that peaceful situation that was theoretically assumed for a certain time, and which is desirable for us, and which would enable us to pass through these stages of transition speedily. We see immediately that the civil war has made many things difficult in Russia, and that the civil war is interwoven with a whole series of wars. Marxists have never forgotten that violence must inevitably accompany the collapse of capitalism in its entirety and the birth of socialist society. That violence will constitute a period of world history, a whole era of various kinds of wars, imperialist wars, civil wars inside countries the intermingling of the two, national wars liberating the nationalities oppressed by the imperialists and by various combinations of imperialist powers that will inevitably enter into various alliances in the epoch of tremendous state-capitalist and military trusts and syndicates. This epoch, an epoch of gigantic cataclysms, of mass decisions forcibly imposed by war, of crises, has begun—that we can see clearly—and it is only the beginning. We therefore have no reason to discard everything bearing on the definition of commodity production in general, of capitalism in gen-

eral. We have only just taken the first steps towards shaking off capitalism altogether and beginning the transition to socialism. We do not know and we cannot know how many stages of transition to socialism there will be. That depends on when the full-scale European socialist revolution begins and on whether it will deal with its enemies and enter upon the smooth path of socialist development easily and rapidly or whether it will do so slowly. We do not know this, and the programme of a Marxist party must be based on facts that have been established with absolute certainty. The power of our Programme—the programme that has found its confirmation in all the complications of the revolution—is in that alone. Marxists must build up their programme on this basis alone. We must proceed from facts that have been established with absolute certainty, facts that show how the development of exchange and commodity production became a dominant historical phenomenon throughout the world, how it led to capitalism and capitalism developed into imperialism; that is an absolutely definite fact that must first and foremost be recorded in our Programme. That imperialism begins the era of the social revolution is also a fact, one that is obvious to us, and about which we must speak clearly. By stating this fact in our Programme we are holding high the torch of the social revolution before the whole world, not as an agitational speech, but as a new Programme that says to the peoples of Western Europe, "Here is what you and we have gathered from the experience of capitalist development. This is what capitalism was, this is how it developed into imperialism, and here is the epoch of the social revolution that is beginning, and in which it is our lot to play, chronologically, the first role." We shall proclaim this manifesto before all civilised countries; it will not only be a fervent appeal but will be substantiated with absolute accuracy and will derive from facts recognised by all socialist parties. It will make all the clearer the contradiction between the tactics of those parties that have now betrayed socialism and the theoretical premises which we all share, and which have entered the flesh and blood of every class-conscious worker—the rise of capitalism and its development into imperialism. On the eve of imperialist wars the congresses at Chemnitz and Basle

passed resolutions defining imperialism, and there is a flagrant contradiction between that definition and the present tactics of the social-traitors.[61] We must, therefore, repeat that which is basic in order to show the working people of Western Europe all the more clearly what we accuse their leaders of.

Such is the basis which I consider to be the only theoretically correct one on which to build a programme. The abandoning of the analysis of commodity production and capitalism as though it were old rubbish is not dictated by the historical nature of what is now happening, since we have not gone farther than the first steps in the transition from capitalism to socialism, and our transition is made more intricate by features that are specific to Russia and do not exist in most civilised countries. And so it is not only possible but inevitable that the stages of transition will be different in Europe; it would be theoretically incorrect to turn all attention to specific national stages of transition that are essential to us but may not be essential in Europe. We must begin with the general basis of the development of commodity production, the transition to capitalism and the growth of capitalism into imperialism. In this way we shall occupy and strengthen a theoretical position from which nobody without betraying socialism can shift us. From this we draw the equally inevitable conclusion—the era of the social revolution is beginning.

We draw this conclusion without departing from our basis of definitely proved facts.

Following this, our task is to define the Soviet type of state. I have tried to outline theoretical views on this question in my book *The State and Revolution*.* It seems to me that the Marxist view on the state has been distorted in the highest degree by the official socialism that is dominant in Western Europe, and that this has been splendidly confirmed by the experience of the Soviet revolution and the establishment of the Soviets in Russia. There is much that is crude and unfinished in our Soviets, there is no doubt about that, it is obvious to everyone who examines their work; but what is impor-

* See present edition, Vol. 25, pp. 385-497.—*Ed.*

tant, has historical value and is a step forward in the world development of socialism, is that they are a new type of state. The Paris Commune was a matter of a few weeks, in one city, without the people being conscious of what they were doing. The Commune was not understood by those who created it; they established the Commune by following the unfailing instinct of the awakened people, and neither of the groups of French socialists was conscious of what it was doing. Because we are standing on the shoulders of the Paris Commune and the many years of development of German Social-Democracy, we have conditions that enable us to see clearly what we are doing in creating Soviet power. Despite all the crudity and lack of discipline that exist in the Soviets—this is a survival of the petty-bourgeois nature of our country—despite all that the new type of state has been created by the masses of the people. It has been functioning for months and not weeks, and not in one city, but throughout a tremendous country, populated by several nations. This type of Soviet power has shown its value since it has spread to Finland, a country that is different in every respect, where there are no Soviets but where there is, at any rate, a new type of power, proletarian power.[62] This is, therefore, proof of what is theoretically regarded as indisputable—that Soviet power is a new type of state without a bureaucracy, without police, without a regular army, a state in which bourgeois democracy has been replaced by a new democracy, a democracy that brings to the fore the vanguard of the working people, gives them legislative and executive authority, makes them responsible for military defence and creates state machinery that can re-educate the masses.

In Russia this has scarcely begun and has begun badly. If we are conscious of what is bad in what we have begun we shall overcome it, provided history gives anything like a decent time to work on that Soviet power. I am therefore of the opinion that a definition of the new type of state should occupy an outstanding place in our Programme. Unfortunately we had to work on our Programme in the midst of governmental work and under conditions of such great haste that we were not even able to convene our commission, to elaborate an official draft programme. What has been

distributed among the delegates is only a rough sketch,* and this will be obvious to everyone. A fairly large amount of space has been allotted in it to the question of Soviet power, and I think that it is here that the international significance of our Programme will make itself felt. I think it would be very wrong of us to confine the international significance of our revolution to slogans, appeals, demonstrations, manifestos, etc. That is not enough. We must show the European workers exactly what we have set about, how we have set about it, how it is to be understood; that will bring them face to face with the question of how socialism is to be achieved. They must see for themselves—the Russians have started on something worth doing; if they are setting about it badly we must do it better. For that purpose we must provide as much concrete material as possible and say what we have tried to create that is new. We have a new type of state in Soviet power; we shall try to outline its purpose and structure, we shall try to explain why this new type of democracy in which there is so much that is chaotic and irrational, to explain what makes up its living spirit—the transfer of power to the working people, the elimination of exploitation and the machinery of suppression. The state is the machinery of suppression. The exploiters must be suppressed, but they cannot be suppressed by police, they must be suppressed by the masses themselves, the machinery must be linked with the masses, must represent them as the Soviets do. They are much closer to the masses, they provide an opportunity to keep closer to the masses, they provide greater opportunities for the education of those masses. We know very well that the Russian peasant is anxious to learn; and we want him to learn, not from books, but from his own experience. Soviet power is machinery, machinery that will enable the masses to begin right away learning to govern the state and organise production on a nation-wide scale. It is a task of tremendous difficulty. It is, however, historically important that we are setting about its fulfilment, and not only from the point of view of our one country; we are calling upon European workers to help. We must give a concrete explanation of our Programme from precisely that common point

* See this volume, pp. 152-58.—*Ed.*

of view. That is why we consider it a continuation of the road taken by the Paris Commune. That is why we are confident that the European workers will be able to help once they have entered on that path. They will do what we are doing, but do it better, and the centre of gravity will shift from the formal point of view to the concrete conditions. In the old days the demand for freedom of assembly was a particularly important one, whereas our point of view on freedom of assembly is that nobody can now prevent meetings, and Soviet power has only to provide premises for meetings. General proclamations of broad principles are important to the bourgeoisie: "All citizens have freedom to assemble, but they must assemble in the open, we shall not give them premises." But we say: "Fewer empty phrases, and more substance." The palaces must be expropriated—not only the Taurida Palace, but many others as well—and we say nothing about freedom of assembly. That must be extended to all other points in the democratic programme. We must be our own judges. All citizens must take part in the work of the courts and in the government of the country. It is important for us to draw literally all working people into the government of the state. It is a task of tremendous difficulty. But socialism cannot be implemented by a minority, by the Party. It can be implemented only by tens of millions when they have learned to do it themselves. We regard it as a point in our favour that we are trying to help the masses themselves set about it immediately, and not to learn to do it from books and lectures. If we state these tasks of ours clearly and definitely we shall thereby give an impetus to the discussion of the question and its practical presentation by the European masses. We are perhaps making a bad job of what has to be done, but we are urging the masses to do what they have to. If what our revolution is doing is not accidental (and we are firmly convinced that it is not), if it is not the product of a Party decision but the inevitable product of any revolution that Marx called "popular", i.e., a revolution that the masses themselves create by their slogans, their efforts and not by a repetition of the programme of the old bourgeois republic—if we present matters in this way, we shall have achieved the most important thing. And here we come to the question of whether

we should abolish the difference between the maximum and minimum programmes. Yes and no. I do not fear this abolition, because the viewpoint we held in summer should no longer exist. I said then, when we still had not taken power, that it was "too soon", but now that we have taken power and tested it, it is not too soon.* In place of the old Programme we must now write a new Programme of Soviet power and not in any way reject the use of bourgeois parliamentarism. It is a utopia to think that we shall not be thrown back.

It cannot be denied historically that Russia has created a Soviet Republic. We say that if ever we are thrown back, while not rejecting the use of bourgeois parliamentarism—if hostile class forces drive us to that old position—we shall aim at what has been gained by experience, at Soviet power, at the Soviet type of state, at the Paris Commune type of state. That must be expressed in the Programme. In place of the minimum programme, we shall introduce the Programme of Soviet power. A definition of the new type of state must occupy an important place in our Programme.

It is obvious that we cannot elaborate a programme at the moment. We must work out its basic premises and hand them over to a commission or to the Central Committee for the elaboration of the main theses. Or still more simply—the elaboration is possible on the basis of the resolution on the Brest-Litovsk Conference, which has already provided theses.** Such a definition of Soviet power should be given on the basis of the experience of the Russian revolution, and followed by a proposal for practical reforms. I think it is here, in the historical part, that mention should be made that the expropriation of the land and of industrial enterprises has begun.[63] Here we shall present the concrete task of organising distribution, unifying the banks into one universal type and converting them into a network of state institutions covering the whole country and providing us with public book-keeping, accounting and control carried out by the population itself and forming the foundation for further socialist steps. I think that this part, being the most

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* See present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 169-73.—*Ed.*
** See this volume, pp. 118-19.—*Ed.*

difficult, should be formulated as the concrete demands of our Soviet power—what we want to do at the moment, what reforms we intend to carry out in the sphere of banking policy, the organisation of production, the organisation of exchange, accountancy and control, the introduction of labour conscription, etc. When we are able to, we shall add what great or small measures or half-measures we have taken in that direction. Here we must state with absolute precision and clarity what has been begun and what has not been completed. We know full well that a large part of what has been begun has not been completed. Without any exaggeration, with full objectivity, without departing from the facts, we must state in our Programme what we have done and what we want to do. We shall show the European proletariat this truth and say, this must be done, so that they will say, such-and-such things the Russians are doing badly but we shall do them better. When this urge reaches the masses the socialist revolution will be invincible. The imperialist war is proceeding before the eyes of all people, a war that is nothing but a war of plunder. When the imperialist war exposes itself in the eyes of the world and becomes a war waged by all the imperialists against Soviet power, against socialism, it will give the proletariat of the West yet another push forward. That must be revealed, the war must be described as an alliance of the imperialists against the socialist movement . These are the general considerations that I think should be shared with you, and on the basis of which I now make the practical proposal to exchange basic views on that question and then, perhaps, elaborate a few fundamental theses here on the spot, and, if that should be found difficult, give up the idea and hand the question of the Programme over to the Central Committee or to a special commission that will be instructed, on the basis of the material available and of the shorthand or secretaries' detailed reports of the Congress, to draw up a Programme for the Party, which must immediately change its name. I am of the opinion that we can do this at the present time, and I think everybody will agree that with our Programme in the editorially unprepared state in which events found it, there is nothing else we can do. I am sure we can do this in a few weeks. We have a sufficient number of theoreticians in all

the trends of our Party to obtain a programme in a few weeks. There may be much that is erroneous in it, of course, to say nothing of editorial and stylistic inaccuracies, because we have not got months in which to settle down to it with the composure that is necessary for editorial work.

We shall correct all these errors in the course of our work in the full confidence that we are giving Soviet power an opportunity to implement the programme. If we at least state precisely, without departing from reality, that Soviet power is a new type of state, a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that we present democracy with different tasks, that we have translated the tasks of socialism from a general abstract formula—"the expropriation of the expropriators"—into such concrete formulas as the nationalisation of the banks[64] and the land, that will be an important part of the Programme.

The land question must be reshaped so that we can see in it the first steps of the small peasantry wanting to take the side of the proletariat and help the socialist revolution, see how the peasants, for all their prejudices and all their old convictions, have set themselves the practical task of the transition to socialism. This is a fact, although we shall not impose it on other countries. The peasantry have shown, not in words but by their deeds, that they wish to help and are helping the proletariat that has taken power to put socialism into effect. It is wrong to accuse us of wanting to introduce socialism by force. We shall divide up the land justly, mainly from the point of view of the small farm. In doing this we give preference to communes and big labour co-operatives.[65] We support the monopolising of the grain trade. We support, the peasantry have said, the confiscation of banks and factories. We are prepared to help the workers in implementing socialism. I think a fundamental law on the socialisation of the land should be published in all languages. This will be done, if it has not been done already.[66] That is an idea we shall state concretely in the Programme—it must be expressed theoretically without departing one single step from concretely established facts. It will be done differently in the West. Perhaps we are making mistakes, but we hope that the proletariat of the West

will correct them. And we appeal to the European proletariat to help us in our work.

In this way we can work out our Programme in a few weeks, and the mistakes we make will be corrected as time goes on—we shall correct them ourselves. Those mistakes will be as light as feathers compared with the positive results that will be achieved.

10

RESOLUTION ON CHANGING THE NAME OF THE PARTY AND THE PARTY PROGRAMME

The Congress resolves that our Party (the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party of Bolsheviks) be named henceforth the *Russian Communist Party*, with the word "Bolsheviks" added in brackets.

The Congress resolves to change the Programme of our Party, re-editing the theoretical part or adding to it a definition of imperialism and the era of the international socialist revolution that has begun.

Following this, the change in the political part of our Programme must consist in the most accurate and comprehensive definition possible of the new type of state, the Soviet Republic, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat and as a continuation of those achievements of the world working-class revolution which the Paris Commune began. The Programme must show that our Party does not reject the use even of bourgeois parliamentarism, should the course of the struggle push us back, for a time, to this historical stage which our revolution has now passed. But in any case and under all circumstances the Party will strive for a Soviet Republic as the highest, from the standpoint of democracy, type of state, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of abolition of the exploiters' yoke and of suppression of their resistance.

The economic, including agrarian, and educational and other parts of our Programme must be recast in the same spirit and direction. The centre of gravity must be a precise definition of the economic and other reforms begun by our Soviet power, with a definite statement of the immediate

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Съезд постановляет именовать
впредь нашу партию (Рос. С.Р. Рабочую
Партию большевиков) Российской
Коммунистической Партией с добав-
лением в скобках „большевиков".

Съезд постановляет выпустить
программу нашей партии, перера-
ботав теоретическую часть и до-
полнив ее характеристикой
империализма и начавшейся
эры (международной) социалистической революции. Затем изложение полити-
ческой части нашей программы

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Resolution on Changing the Name of the Party and the Party Programme". March 1918

definite tasks which Soviet power has set itself, and which proceed from the practical steps we have already taken towards expropriating the expropriators.

The Congress instructs the special commission to compile, with the utmost urgency, a programme for our Party based on the points laid down and to have it approved as the Programme of our Party.

Pravda No. 45,
March 9, 1918

Published according to
the manuscript

11

PROPOSAL CONCERNING THE REVISION OF THE PARTY PROGRAMME MARCH 8 (EVENING)

Comrades, allow me to read the draft of a resolution which formulates a somewhat different proposal, but which in substance is somewhat similar to what the last speaker has said.[67] I request the Congress's attention to the following resolution. (*He reads it.*)*

Comrades, the distinguishing feature of this proposal is that I want first of all to defend my idea of accelerating the publication of the Programme and directly instruct the Central Committee to publish it or set up a special commission.

The tempo of development is so furious that we ought not to delay. In view of the difficulties of the present time, we shall have a programme in which there will be many mistakes, but that does not matter—the next Congress will correct it, even if it is a too rapid correction of the Programme; but events move so swiftly that if it is necessary to make a series of alterations to the Programme, we shall make them. Our Programme now will be constructed not so much according to the books as from practice, from the experience of Soviet power. Accordingly, I believe that it is in our interests to approach the international proletariat not with ardent appeals, not with exhortatory speeches at meetings, not with shouts, but with the precise, concrete Programme of our Party. Let the Programme be less satisfactory than one which would result from being worked

* See this volume, pp. 140-41.—*Ed.*

on in a number of commissions and endorsed by the Congress.

I venture to hope that we shall pass this resolution unanimously because I have avoided the disagreement to which Comrade Bukharin has referred; I have formulated it in such a way as to leave the question open. We can hope that if too great changes do not occur we shall be in a position to have a new programme which will be a precise document for the All-Russia Party, and shall not be in the nasty position in which I found myself when at the last Congress one of the Left Swedes asked me: "But what is the programme of your Party—is it the same as that of the Mensheviks?"[68] You ought to have seen the expression of surprise on the face of this Swede, who fully understood how immensely far we had gone away from the Mensheviks. We cannot allow such a monstrous contradiction to remain. I think that this will be of practical benefit to the international working-class movement, and that what we shall gain will undoubtedly outweigh the fact that the programme will have mistakes. That is why I propose that this be accelerated, without being in the least afraid of the Congress having to correct it.

12

SPEECH ON MGELADZE'S PROPOSAL FOR DRAWING THE CHIEF PARTY ORGANISATIONS INTO THE WORK OF DRAFTING THE PARTY PROGRAMME MARCH 8 (EVENING)

Under the conditions in which Russia is at present—in a state of civil war, of being cut up into parts—this is impermissible. It goes without saying that if it is at all possible the commission which will make corrections will print them immediately, and on each occasion the local organisations will be able to express their opinion and must do so, but formally to bind ourselves to do something that cannot be carried out in the near future will entail still greater delay than a congress.

13

SPEECH AGAINST LARIN'S AMENDMENT TO THE NAME OF THE PARTY[69] MARCH 8 (EVENING)

Comrades, I agree with Comrade Larin that the change of title and the dropping of the term Labour Party, will certainly be made use of, but that should not worry us. If we were to reckon with every drawback, we should be immersed in trifles. What we are doing is to return to a good old model that is known throughout the world. We all know the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*,[70] the whole world knows it; the purpose of the correction is not to state that the proletariat is the only class which is revolutionary to the end, and that all other classes, including the working peasantry, can be revolutionary only in so far as they come over to the point of view of the proletariat. That is so fundamental, such a world-renowned thesis of the *Communist Manifesto*, that there cannot be any honest misunderstandings here, and as for dishonest ones, there is no keeping up with false interpretations in any case. That is why we must return now to the old, good, undoubtedly correct model which has played its part in history, spreading to all countries, to the whole world; I think that there are no grounds for departing from this best of all models.

14

SPEECH AGAINST PELSHE'S AMENDMENT TO THE RESOLUTION ON THE PARTY PROGRAMME MARCH 8 (EVENING)

I think that the last speaker is wrong.[71] The masses are not children and they understand that the struggle is extremely serious. They saw how we were thrown back previously, for example in July. It is impossible to delete these words. We ought not in any way to give the impression that we attach absolutely no value to bourgeois parliamentary institutions. They are a huge advance on what preceded them. By rejecting these words we create an impression of something that does not yet exist—of the absolute stability of the stage achieved. We know that this is not so yet. It will be so when the international movement gives its support. I am ready to delete the words "under no circumstances"; it is possible to leave the words "the Party will not reject the use", but we cannot leave the way open for a purely anarchist denial of bourgeois parliamentarism. These are stages directly linked one with another, and any repulse can throw us back to that stage. I do not consider that this would cause the masses to be despondent. If by the masses we mean people who are politically quite uneducated—they will not understand, but the Party members and sympathisers will understand, they will realise that we do not regard the positions won as definitely consolidated. If by a gigantic effort of will we arouse the energy of all classes, and consolidate this position, then we shall cease to recall the past. But that requires the support of Europe. But to say now that we may work under worse circumstances will not result in any despondency among the masses.

15

SPEECH AGAINST BUKHARIN'S AMENDMENT TO THE RESOLUTION ON THE PARTY PROGRAMME[72] MARCH 8 (EVENING)

I

I cannot agree at all to Comrade Bukharin's amendment. The Programme characterises imperialism and the era of social revolution that has begun. The era of social revolution has begun—this has been established with absolute accuracy. What, however, does Comrade Bukharin want?—That we should give a description of socialist society in its developed form, i.e., communism. Here he is inaccurate. At present we certainly uphold the state and to say we should give a description of socialism in its developed form where the state will cease to exist—you couldn't do anything about that except say that then the principle would be realised: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs. But this is still a long way off, and to say that means not saying anything except that we have no firm ground to go on. We shall arrive there in the long run if we reach socialism. It is enough for us to set to work on what we have said. If we were to do this it would be a tremendous historic achievement. We cannot give a description of socialism; what socialism will be like when its completed forms are arrived at—this we do not know, we cannot tell. To say that the era of social revolution has begun, that we have done this or that, and that we want to do this or that—this we do know and will say, and it will show the European workers that we do not in any way exaggerate, so to speak, our strength; this is what we have begun to do and what we intend to do. But as to knowing at the present time what social-

ism will look like when completed—this we do not know. Theoretically, in theoretical works, in articles, speeches and lectures, we shall expound the view that the struggle against the anarchists is being waged by Kautsky incorrectly, but we cannot put this in the Programme because we do not yet have the data for a description of socialism. The bricks of which socialism will be composed have not yet been made. We cannot say anything further, and we should be as cautious and accurate as possible. In that and only in that will lie our Programme's power of attraction. But if we advance the slightest claim to something that we cannot give, the power of our Programme will be weakened. It will be suspected that our Programme is only a fantasy. The Programme describes what we have begun to do and the succeeding steps that we wish to take. We are not in a position to give a description of socialism and it was incorrect that this task was formulated.

II

Since the formulation was not in writing, misunderstanding, of course, is possible. But Comrade Bukharin did not convince me. The name of our Party indicates sufficiently clearly that we are advancing towards complete communism, thus we are putting forward such abstract propositions as that each of us will work according to his ability and will receive according to his needs, without any military control and compulsion. It is premature to speak about this now. Just when will the state wither away? We shall have managed to convene more than two congresses before the time comes to say: see how our state is withering away. It is too early for that. To proclaim the withering away of the state prematurely would distort the historical perspective .

16

SPEECH ON THE QUESTION OF ELECTIONS TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE[73] MARCH 8 (EVENING)

Lomov very cleverly referred to my speech in which I demanded that the Central Committee should be capable of pursuing a uniform line. This does not mean that all those in the Central Committee should be of one and the same opinion. To hold that view would be to go towards a split; therefore I proposed that the Congress should not accept this declaration, in order to enable the comrades, after consulting their local organisations, to think over their decision. I, too, was in the Central Committee in such a position at the time when a proposal not to sign the peace treaty was adopted, and I kept silent, without in any way closing my eyes to the fact that I was not accepting responsibility for it. Every member of the Central Committee is able to disclaim responsibility without ceasing to be a member and without raising an uproar. Of course, comrades, in certain circumstances it is permissible, sometimes it is inevitable, but that this should be necessary now with the present organisation of Soviet power, which enables us to check how far we are keeping contact with the masses—this I doubt. I think that if the question of Vinnichenko arises, the comrades can defend their point of view without resigning from the Central Committee. If we are going to uphold the standpoint of preparing for a revolutionary war and of manoeuvring, it is necessary to enter the Central Committee; one can state that disagreements have arisen from below, we have an absolute right to make a statement about that. There is not the slightest danger that history

will impose responsibility on Uritsky and Lomov for not rejecting the title of members of the Central Committee. We must try to find some kind of restraint that will do away with the fashion for resigning from the Central Committee. It should be stated that the Congress expresses the hope that comrades will formulate their disagreement through their protests but not by resigning from the Central Committee, and that the Congress, taking its statement into account, will vote against removal of the candidatures of the group of comrades and will hold the elections, calling on them to take back their declarations.

17

RESOLUTION ON THE REFUSAL OF THE "LEFT COMMUNISTS" TO BE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The Congress is of the opinion that a refusal to enter the Central Committee in the situation at present obtaining in the Party is particularly undesirable, since such a refusal is in general impermissible in principle to those who desire the unity of the Party, and would today be a double threat to unity.

The Congress declares that everyone can and should deny his responsibility for any step taken by the Central Committee, if he does not agree with it, by means of a declaration to that effect but not by leaving the Central Committee.

The Congress is firm in the hope that the comrades will, after a consultation with the mass organisations, withdraw their resignation; the Congress will, therefore, carry through elections without taking the statement of resignation into consideration.

Published according to the manuscript

18

ROUGH OUTLINE OF THE DRAFT PROGRAMME

My draft to be taken as the basis* (pamphlet, p. 19 *et seq.*).

The theoretical part to remain, after discarding the last paragraph of the first part (p. 22 of the pamphlet, from the words "The urgent task of the day" to the words "the substance of the socialist revolution",** i.e., 5 lines).

In the next paragraph (p. 22), beginning with the words "The fulfilment of this task", insert the alteration indicated in the article "Concerning a Revision of the Party Programme" in *Prosveshcheniye* (No. 1-2, September-October 1917), p. 93.***

In the same paragraph in two places insert instead of "social-chauvinism":

(1) "*opportunism* and social-chauvinism";

(2) "between *opportunism* and social-chauvinism, on the one hand, and the revolutionary internationalist struggle of the proletariat for the realisation of the socialist system, on the other."

Further on, everything has to be re-written, approximately as follows:

* The name of the Party simply: "Communist Party" (without addition of "Russian"), but in brackets: (Party of Bolsheviks).

** See present edition, Vol. 24, p. 469.—*Ed.*

*** *Ibid.*, Vol. 24, p. 470, and Vol. 26, p. 169.—*Ed.*

The Revolution of October 25 (November 7), 1917 in Russia brought about the dictatorship of the proletariat, which has been supported by the poor peasants or semi-proletarians.

This dictatorship confronts the Communist Party in Russia with the task of carrying through to the end, of completing, the expropriation of the landowners and bourgeoisie that has already begun, and the transfer of all factories, railways, banks, the fleet and other means of production and exchange to ownership by the Soviet Republic;

utilisation of the alliance of urban workers and poor peasants, which has already abolished private ownership of land, and utilisation of the law on the transitional form between small-peasant farming and socialism, which modern ideologists of the peasantry that has put itself on the side of the proletarians have called socialisation of the land, for a gradual but steady transition to joint tillage and large-scale socialist agriculture;

consolidation and further development of the Federative Republic of Soviets as an immeasurably higher and more progressive form of democracy than bourgeois parliamentarism, and as the sole type of state corresponding, on the basis of the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 and equally of the experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917-18, to the transitional period between capitalism and socialism, i.e., to the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat;

thorough utilisation in every way of the torch of world socialist revolution lit in Russia in order, by paralysing the attempts of the imperialist bourgeois states to intervene in the internal affairs of Russia or to unite for direct struggle and war against the socialist Soviet Republic, to carry the revolution into the most advanced countries and in general into all countries.

TEN THESES ON SOVIET POWER

Consolidation and Development of Soviet Power

The consolidation and development of Soviet power as the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry (semi-proletarians), a form already tested by

experience and brought to the fore by the mass movement and the revolutionary struggle.

The consolidation and development must consist in the accomplishment (a broader, more general and planned accomplishment) of those tasks which historically devolve on this form of state power, on this new type of state, namely:

(1) union and organisation of the working and exploited masses oppressed by capitalism, and only them, i.e., only the workers and poor peasantry, semi-proletarians, with automatic exclusion of the exploiting classes and rich representatives of the petty bourgeoisie;

(2) union of the most vigorous, active, class-conscious part of the oppressed classes, their vanguard, which must educate every member of the working population for independent participation in the management of the state, not theoretically but practically;

(4) (3) abolition of parliamentarism (as the separation of legislative from executive activity); union of legislative and executive state activity. Fusion of administration with legislation;

(3) (4) closer connection of the whole apparatus of state power and state administration with the masses than under previous forms of democracy;

(5) creation of an armed force of workers and peasants, one least divorced from the people (Soviets = armed workers and peasants). Organised character of nation-wide arming of the people, as one of the first steps towards arming the whole people;

(6) more complete democracy, through less formality and making election and recall easier;

(7) close (and direct) connection with occupations and with productive-economic units (elections based on factories, and on local peasant and handicraft areas). This close connection makes it possible to carry out profound socialist changes;

(8) (partly, if not wholly, covered by the preceding)—the possibility of getting rid of bureaucracy, of doing without it, the beginning of the realisation of this possibility;

(9) transfer of the focus of attention in questions of democracy from formal recognition of a formal equality of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, of poor and rich, to the prac-

tical feasibility of the enjoyment of freedom (democracy) by the working and exploited mass of the population;

(10) the further development of the Soviet organisation of the state must consist in every member of a Soviet being obliged to carry out constant work in administering the state, alongside participation in meetings of the Soviet;—and furthermore in each and every member of the population being drawn gradually both into taking part in Soviet organisation (on the condition of subordination to organisations of the working people) and into serving in state administration.

The Fulfilment of These Tasks Requires:

a) in the political sphere: development of the Soviet Republic.

Advantages of Soviets (*Prosveshcheniye*, pp. 13-14)*; (six items);

extension of the Soviet Constitution *in so far as* the resistance of the exploiters ceases to the *whole* population;

federation of nations, as a transition to a *conscious* and closer unity of the working people, when they have learnt *voluntarily* to rise above national dissension;

necessarily ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters; standards of "general" (*i.e.*, bourgeois) democracy are subordinate to this aim, give way to it:

"Liberties" and democracy *not* for all, but *for* the working and exploited masses, to emancipate them from exploitation; ruthless suppression of exploiters;

NB: chief stress is shifted *from* formal *recognition* of liberties (such as existed under bourgeois parliamentarism) *to* actually ensuring the *enjoyment* of liberties by the working people who are overthrowing the exploiters, e.g., from *recognition* of freedom of assembly to the *handing over* of all the best halls and premises to the workers, from recognition of freedom of speech to the handing over of all the best printing presses to the workers, and so forth.

* See present edition, Vol. 26, p. 103.—*Ed.*

A brief enumeration of these "liberties" from the old minimum programme.

[Arming the workers and disarming the bourgeoisie.]

Transition *through* the Soviet state to the gradual abolition of the state by systematically drawing an ever greater number of citizens, and subsequently *each and every* citizen, into direct and *daily* performance of their share of the burdens of administering the state.

b) In the economic sphere:

Socialist organisation of production on the scale of the whole state: management by *workers' organisations* (trade unions, factory committees, etc.) under the general leadership of Soviet power, which alone is *sovereign*.

The same for transport and distribution (at first state monopoly of "trade", subsequently replacement, complete and final, of "trade" by planned, organised *distribution* through associations of trading and industrial office workers, under the leadership of Soviet power).

—Compulsory organisation of the *whole* population in consumer and producer communes.

While not (for the time being) abolishing money and not prohibiting individual purchase and sale transactions by individual families, we must, in the first place, make it obligatory by law to carry out all such transactions through the consumer and producer communes.

—An immediate start to be made on full realisation of universal compulsory labour service, with the most cautious and gradual extension of it to the small peasants who live by their own farming without wage labour;

the first measure, the first step towards universal compulsory labour service must be the introduction of consumers' work (budget) books (compulsory introduction) for all well-to-do (=persons with an income over 500 rubles per month, and then for owners of enterprises with wage-workers, for families with servants, etc.).

Buying and selling is also permissible not through one's commune (during journeys, at markets, etc.), but with compulsory entry of the transaction (if above a definite sum) in the consumers' work book.

—Complete concentration of banking in the hands of the state and of all financial operations of trade in the banks.

Standardisation of banking current accounts; gradual transition to the compulsory keeping of current accounts in the bank, at first by the largest, and later by *all* the country's enterprises. Compulsory deposit of money in the banks and transfer of money *only* through the banks.

—Standardisation of accounting and control over all production and distribution of output; this accounting and control must be carried out at first by workers' organisations and subsequently by *each and every* member of the population.

—Organisation of competition between the various (all) consumer and producer communes of the country for steady improvement of organisation, discipline and labour productivity, for transition to superior techniques, for economising labour and materials, for gradually reducing the working day to six hours, and for gradually equalising *all* wages and salaries in *all* occupations and categories.

—Steady, systematic measures for (transition to *Massenspeisung**) replacement of the individual domestic economy of separate families by joint catering for large groups of families.

In the educational sphere

the old items, plus.

In the financial sphere

replacement of indirect taxes by a progressive income and property tax, and equally by deduction of a (definite) revenue from state monopolies. In this connection, remittance in kind of bread and other products to workers employed by the state in various forms of socially necessary labour.

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Support of the revolutionary movement of the socialist proletariat in the advanced countries in the first instance.

Propaganda. Agitation. Fraternisation.

Ruthless struggle against opportunism and social-chauvinism.

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* public catering.—*Ed.*

Support of the democratic and revolutionary movement in all countries in general, and especially in the colonies and dependent countries.

Liberation of the colonies. Federation as a transition to voluntary fusion.

Kommunist No. 5,
March 9, 1918

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THE CHIEF TASK OF OUR DAY[74]

Thou art wretched, thou art abundant,
Thou art mighty , thou art impotent
—Mother Russia![75]

Human history these days is making a momentous and most difficult turn, a turn, one might say without the least exaggeration, of immense significance for the emancipation of the world. A turn from war to peace; a turn from a war between plunderers who are sending to the shambles millions of the working and exploited people for the sake of establishing a new system of dividing the spoils looted by the strongest of them, to a war of the oppressed against the oppressors for liberation from the yoke of capital; a turn from an abyss of suffering, anguish, starvation and degradation to the bright future of communist society, universal prosperity and enduring peace. No wonder that at the sharpest points of this sharp turn, when all around the old order is breaking down and collapsing with a terrible grinding crash, and the new order is being born amid indescribable suffering, there are some whose heads grow dizzy, some who are seized by despair, some who seek salvation from the at times too bitter reality in fine-sounding and alluring phrases.

It has been Russia's lot to see most clearly, and experience most keenly and painfully the sharpest of sharp turning-points in history as it swings round from imperialism towards the communist revolution. In the space of a few days we destroyed one of the oldest, most powerful, barbarous and brutal of monarchies. In the space of a few months we passed through a number of stages of collaboration with the bourgeoisie and of shaking off petty-bourgeois illusions, for which other countries have required decades. In the course

of a few weeks, having overthrown the bourgeoisie, we crushed its open resistance in civil war. We passed in a victorious triumphal march of Bolshevism from one end of a vast country to the other. We raised the lowest strata of the working people oppressed by tsarism and the bourgeoisie to liberty and independent life. We established and consolidated a Soviet Republic, a new type of state, which is infinitely superior to, and more democratic than, the best of the bourgeois-parliamentary republics. We established the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the poor peasantry, and began a broadly conceived system of socialist reforms. We awakened the faith of the millions upon millions of workers of all countries in their own strength and kindled the fires of enthusiasm in them. Everywhere we issued the call for a world workers' revolution. We flung a challenge to the imperialist plunderers of all countries.

Then in a few days we were thrown to the ground by an imperialist plunderer, who fell upon the unarmed. He compelled us to sign an incredibly burdensome and humiliating peace—as tribute for having dared to tear ourselves, even for the shortest space of time, from the iron clutches of an imperialist war. The more ominously the shadow of a workers' revolution in his own country rises before the plunderer, the greater his ferocity in crushing and stifling Russia and tearing her to pieces.

We were compelled to sign a "Tilsit" peace. We need no self-deception. We must courageously look the bitter, unadorned truth straight in the face. We must measure fully, to the very bottom, that abyss of defeat, dismemberment, enslavement, and humiliation into which we have now been pushed. The more clearly we understand this, the firmer, the more steeled and tempered will be our will to liberation, our aspiration to rise again from enslavement to independence, and our unbending determination to ensure that at any price Russia ceases to be wretched and impotent and becomes mighty and abundant in the full meaning of these words.

And mighty and abundant she can become, for, after all, we still have sufficient territory and natural wealth left to us to supply each and all, if not with abundant, at least

with adequate means, of life. Our natural wealth, our manpower and the splendid impetus which the great revolution has given to the creative powers of the people are ample material to build a truly mighty and abundant Russia.

Russia will become mighty and abundant if she abandons all dejection and all phrase-making, if, with clenched teeth, she musters all her forces and strains every nerve and muscle, if she realises that salvation lies *only* along that road of world socialist revolution upon which we have set out. March forward along that road, undismayed by defeats, lay the firm foundation of socialist society stone by stone, work with might and main to establish discipline and self-discipline, consolidate everywhere organisation, order, efficiency, and the harmonious co-operation of all the forces of the people, introduce comprehensive accounting of and control over production and distribution—such is the way to build up military might and socialist might.

It would be unworthy of a genuine socialist who has suffered grave defeat either to bluster or to give way to despair. It is not true that our position is hopeless and that all that remains for us is to choose between an "inglorious" death (inglorious from the point of view of the *szlachcic*), such as this harsh peace represents, and a "gallant" death in a hopeless fight. It is not true that by signing a "Tilsit" peace we have betrayed our ideals or our friends. We have betrayed nothing and nobody, we have not sanctified or covered up any lie, we have not refused to help a single friend or comrade in misfortune in every way we could and with everything at our disposal. A general who withdraws the remnants of his army into the heart of the country when it has been beaten or is in panic-stricken flight, or who, in extremity, shields this retreat by a harsh and humiliating peace, is not guilty of treachery towards that part of his army which he is powerless to help and which has been cut off by the enemy. Such a general performs his duty by choosing the only way of saving what can still be saved, by refusing to gamble recklessly, by not embellishing the bitter truth for the people, by "surrendering space in order to gain time", by taking advantage of any *and every respite*, even the briefest, in which to muster his forces and to allow his army to rest or recover, if it is affected by disintegration and demoralisation.

We have signed a "Tilsit" peace. When Napoleon I, in 1807, compelled Prussia to sign the Peace of Tilsit, the conqueror smashed the Germans' entire army, occupied their capital and all their big cities, brought in his own police, compelled the vanquished to supply him, the conqueror, with auxiliary corps for fresh predatory wars, and partitioned Germany, concluding alliances with some German states against others. Nevertheless, the German people survived even *such* a peace, proved able to muster their forces, to rise and to win the right to liberty and independence.

To all those who are able and willing to think, the example of the Peace of Tilsit (which was only one of many harsh and humiliating treaties forced upon the Germans at that period) clearly shows how childishly naïve is the idea that under all conditions a harsh peace means the bottomless pit of ruin, while war is the path of valour and salvation. Periods of war teach us that peace has not infrequently in history served as a respite and a means of mustering forces for new battles. The Peace of Tilsit was a supreme humiliation for Germany, but at the same time it marked a turn towards a supreme national resurgence. At that time historical conditions were such that this resurgence could be channelled only in the direction of a *bourgeois* state. At that time, more than a hundred years ago, history was made by handfuls of nobles and a sprinkling of bourgeois intellectuals, while the worker and peasant masses were somnolent and dormant. As a result history at that time could only crawl along at a terribly slow pace.

But now capitalism has raised culture in general, and the culture of the masses in particular, to a much higher level. War has shaken up the masses, its untold horrors and suffering have awakened them. War has given history momentum and it is now flying with locomotive speed. History is now being independently made by millions and tens of millions of people. Capitalism has now matured for socialism.

Consequently, if Russia is now passing—as she undeniably is—from a "Tilsit" peace to a national resurgence, to a great patriotic war, the outlet for it is not in the direction of a bourgeois state, but in the direction of a world socialist revolution. Since October 25, 1917, we have been defencists.

We are for "defence of the fatherland"; but that patriotic war towards which we are moving is a war for a socialist fatherland, for socialism as a fatherland, for the Soviet Republic as a contingent of the world army of socialism.

"Hate the Germans, kill the Germans"—such was, and is, the slogan of common, i.e., bourgeois, patriotism. But we will say "Hate the imperialist plunderers, hate capitalism, death to capitalism" and at the same time "Learn from the Germans! Remain true to the brotherly alliance with the German workers. They are late in coming to our aid. We shall gain time, we shall live to see them coming, and they will come, to our aid."

Yes, learn from the Germans! History is moving in zigzags and by roundabout ways. It so happens that it is the Germans who now personify, besides a brutal imperialism, the principle of discipline, organisation, harmonious cooperation on the basis of modern machine industry, and strict accounting and control.

And that is just what we are lacking. That is just what we must learn. That is just what our great revolution needs in order to pass from a triumphant beginning, through a succession of severe trials, to its triumphant goal. That is just what the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic requires in order to cease being wretched and impotent and become mighty and abundant for all time.

March 11, 1918

Izvestia VTsIK No. 46,
March 12, 1918
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to
the text of the pamphlet:
N. Lenin, *The Chief Task of Our Day*, Moscow, 1918

SPEECH IN THE MOSCOW SOVIET OF WORKERS', PEASANTS' AND RED ARMY DEPUTIES MARCH 12, 1918

VERBATIM REPORT

Comrades, we are celebrating the anniversary of the Russian revolution at a time when the revolution is passing through difficult days, when many are ready to give way to despondency and disillusionment. But if we look around us, if we recall what the revolution has achieved during this past year and how the international situation is shaping, then not one of us, I am sure, will find room for despair or despondency. There should be no room for doubt that the world socialist revolution, begun in October, will triumph over all difficulties and obstacles, over all the efforts of its enemies.

Comrades, remember how the Russian revolution developed.... Remember how, in a few days in February, thanks to the joint action of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, who saw that under tsarism even a bourgeois society could not exist, thanks to the co-operation between the workers and the more enlightened section of the peasants, namely, the soldiers, who had lived through all the horrors of war—remember how in a few days they succeeded in overthrowing the monarchy, which in 1905, 1906 and 1907 had resisted incomparably heavier blows and drowned revolutionary Russia in blood. And when, after the February victory, the bourgeoisie found themselves in power, the revolution went forward with incredible speed.

The Russian revolution produced results which sharply distinguish it from the revolutions in Western Europe. It produced revolutionary people prepared by the events of

1905 to take independent action; it produced the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, bodies incomparably more democratic than all those preceding them, able to educate, elevate and lead the oppressed mass of workers, soldiers and peasants. Thanks to these circumstances the Russian revolution within a few months passed through that period of compromise with the bourgeoisie which in Western Europe took entire decades. The bourgeoisie now say that the working class and its representatives, the Bolsheviks, are to blame for the fact that the army was unequal to the situation. But we can now see that if at that time—in March and April—power had not been in the hands of the conciliators, of the bourgeoisie who secured cushy jobs for themselves and placed the capitalists in power, while at the same time leaving the army ragged and starving, if power had not been in the hands of such gentlemen as Kerensky, who called themselves socialists, but who actually carried in their pockets secret treaties binding the Russian people to fight until 1918, then perhaps the Russian army and revolution might have been spared those incredibly severe trials and humiliations through which we have had to pass. If at that time power had passed to the Soviets, if the conciliators, instead of helping Kerensky to drive the army into battle, had come forward with a proposal for a democratic peace, then our army would not have been so badly shattered. They should have said to it: stand by. In one hand let it hold the torn-up secret treaty with the imperialists and the proposal to all nations for a democratic peace; in the other let it hold rifle and gun, and let the front remain absolutely intact. If that had been done, the army and the revolution could have been saved. Such a gesture, even before an enemy like German imperialism, even if it were aided by the whole bourgeoisie, by the entire capitalist world, by all the representatives of the bourgeois parties, such a gesture could, nevertheless, have been of help then. This gesture could have put the enemy in a situation where it would have seen, on the one hand, the proposed democratic peace and the unmasked treaties and, on the other hand, the guns. Today we have not such a strong front. We cannot reinforce it without artillery. The restoration of the front is too difficult, it is proceeding too slowly because we

have never come into contact with such an enemy. It was one thing to struggle with that idiot Romanov or that boaster Kerensky, but here we have an enemy which has organised all its forces and the economic life of its country for defence against the revolution. We knew that in June 1917, instead of tearing up the imperialist treaties, Kerensky's government hurled the soldiers into an offensive, which sapped their strength completely. And now, when the bourgeoisie scream about unparalleled disorganisation and national disgrace, do they imagine that a revolution, born of war, born of unprecedented destruction, can develop calmly, smoothly, peacefully, without suffering, without torment, without horror? Anyone who imagines the revolution beginning in this way is either nothing but a phrase-monger, or one of those flabby intellectuals incapable of understanding the significance of this war and of the revolution. Yes, that is how they reason. But to us it is clear that throughout this whole process a great national resurgence is taking place, which those who scream about national disgrace do not see.

However that may be, we have extricated ourselves from the war. We are not saying that we extricated ourselves without giving anything in return, without paying a price. But we managed to get out of the war. We gave the people a breathing-space. We do not know how long this breathing-space will last. Possibly it will be exceedingly brief because the imperialist robbers are bearing down on us from the West and the East, and a new war will inevitably begin. We do not close our eyes to the fact that the country lies in ruins. But the people have been able to rid themselves of the tsarist government, of the bourgeois government, and to create Soviet organisations which only now, when the soldiers have returned from the front, have reached the remotest villages. The necessity for them and their significance have been understood by the lowest strata of the people, by the most oppressed and downtrodden of the people, who were wronged and humiliated by tsars, landowners and capitalists, and who were seldom able to put heart and soul into anything or display their creative ability. They not only established Soviet power in the large towns and factory areas, but also in the most remote corners of the country. Every peasant who up to now has known only

oppression and robbery at the hands of the authorities, now sees the government of the poor in power, the government which he himself elects, which has liberated him from oppression, and which, despite all the unparalleled obstacles and difficulties, will be able to lead him still farther.

Comrades, although we now have to live through days of heavy defeat and oppression, when the head of the Russian revolution is under the boot of the Prussian landowners and imperialists, I am sure, no matter how great may be the anger and indignation in some circles, that deep among the people a constructive process is taking place, an accumulation of energy and discipline, which will give us the strength to survive all blows, and which proves that we have not betrayed, and will not betray, the revolution. If we have been compelled to undergo these trials and defeats, it is because the course of history does not run smoothly and pleasantly, permitting the working people of all countries to rise simultaneously with us. We must not forget the sort of enemy we are dealing with. The enemies with whom we have had to deal before, Romanov, Kerensky and the Russian bourgeoisie—the stupid, unorganised, uncultured bourgeoisie that only yesterday licked the boots of Romanov and then ran about with secret treaties in their pockets—do these enemies amount to anything compared with the international bourgeoisie, who have turned all the achievements of the human mind into a weapon to suppress the will of the working people and have adapted the whole of their organisation to exterminating people?

This is the enemy that has hurled itself at us just at the moment when we have completely disarmed, when we have to state quite openly: we have no army, we are a country which has lost its army and is forced to accept a very humiliating peace.

We are not deceiving anybody, we are not betraying anyone, we are not refusing to aid our brothers. But we shall have to accept a very onerous peace, we shall have to accept terrible conditions. We shall have to retreat in order to gain time while this is still possible, so that our allies can come to our aid. And we have got allies. No matter how great our hatred of imperialism, no matter how strong the feeling,

a justified feeling, of anger and indignation against it, we must recognise that we are now defencists. It is not secret treaties that we are defending, we are defending socialism, we are defending our socialist fatherland. In order to be able to defend it, however, we have had to accept the most bitter humiliation. We know that there are periods in every nation's history when it is obliged to retreat before the pressure of an enemy with stronger nerves. We have gained a breathing-space, and we must make use of it so that the army may have some sort of respite, so that as a mass (not those tens of thousands in the large cities who attend meetings, but the millions and tens of millions who have dispersed to the villages) it should understand that the old war is over, and a new war is beginning, a war to which we have replied with a peace offer, a war in which we have retreated in order to overcome our lack of discipline, our inertia, our flabbiness—despite which we were able to defeat tsarism and the Russian bourgeoisie, but not the European international bourgeoisie. If we overcome them we shall be the victors, because we have allies, and we are convinced of this.

However viciously the international imperialists now behave on seeing our defeat, their enemies, who are our allies, are maturing within their own countries. We know and have always known for certain that among the German working class this process is taking place, perhaps more slowly than we expected, than we would have liked, but there is no doubt that indignation against the imperialists is growing, that the number of allies in our work is increasing and that they will come to our aid.

You must give all your strength, provide the right watchword and enforce discipline. This is our duty to the socialist revolution. Then we shall be able to hold out until the allied proletariat comes to our aid and, together, we shall defeat all the imperialists and capitalists.

Izvestia VTsIK No. 47,
March 14, 1918

Published according to the text of *Izvestia*, collated with the verbatim report

EXTRAORDINARY FOURTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS[76]

MARCH 14-16, 1918

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MARCH 14–16, 1918

1

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON WILSON'S MESSAGE[77]

The Congress expresses its gratitude to the American people, and primarily to the working and exploited classes of the United States of America, in connection with President Wilson's expression of his sympathy for the Russian people through the Congress of Soviets at a time when the Soviet Socialist Republic of Russia is passing through severe trials.

The Russian Soviet Republic, having become a neutral country, takes advantage of the message received from President Wilson to express to all peoples that are perishing and suffering from the horrors of the imperialist war its profound sympathy and firm conviction that the happy time is not far away when the working people of all bourgeois countries will throw off the yoke of capital and establish the socialist system of society, the only system able to ensure a durable and just peace and also culture and well-being for all working people.

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2

REPORT ON RATIFICATION OF THE PEACE TREATY MARCH 14

Comrades, today we have to settle a question that marks a turning-point in the development of the Russian revolution, and not only of the Russian but also of the international revolution, and in order to decide correctly on this very harsh peace which representatives of Soviet power have concluded at Brest-Litovsk, and which Soviet power asks you to approve, or ratify—in order to settle this question correctly it is more than ever necessary for us to get an understanding of the historical meaning of the turning-point we are at, an understanding of the main feature of the development of the revolution up to now and the main reason for the severe defeat and the period of stern trials we have passed through.

It seems to me that the chief source of disagreement among the Soviet parties[78] on this question is that some people too easily give way to a feeling of just and legitimate indignation over the defeat of the Soviet Republic by imperialism, too easily give way at times to despair instead of considering the historical conditions of the revolution as they developed up to the time of the present peace, and as they appear to us since the peace; instead of doing that they try to answer questions of the tactics of the revolution on the basis of their immediate feelings. The entire history of revolutions, however, teaches us that when we have to do with a mass movement or with the class struggle, especially one like that at present developing not only throughout a single country, albeit a tremendous country, but also involving all international relations—in such a case we must base our

tactics first and foremost on an appraisal of the objective situation, we must examine analytically the course of the revolution up to this moment and the reason it has taken a turn so menacing and so sharp, and so much to our disadvantage.

If we examine the development of our revolution from that point of view we see clearly that it has so far passed through a period of relative and largely imaginary self-dependence, and of being temporarily independent of international relations. The path travelled by our revolution from the end of February 1917 to February 11 of this year,[79] when the German offensive began, was, by and large, a path of easy and rapid successes. If we study the development of that revolution on an international scale, from the standpoint of the Russian revolution alone, we shall see that we have passed through three periods in the past year. The first period is that in which the working class of Russia, together with all advanced, class-conscious and active peasants, supported not only by the petty bourgeoisie but also by the big bourgeoisie, swept away the monarchy in a few days. This astounding success is to be explained by the fact that on the one hand, the Russian people had acquired a big reserve of revolutionary fighting potential from the experience of 1905, while on the other hand, Russia, an extremely backward country, had suffered more than any other from the war and had, at an especially early date, reached a stage when it was absolutely impossible to continue the war under the old regime.

This short tempestuous success when a new organisation was created—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies—was followed by the long months of the period of transition of our revolution, the period in which the government of the bourgeoisie, immediately undermined by the Soviets, was kept going and strengthened by the petty-bourgeois compromising parties, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who supported it. It was a government that supported the imperialist war and the imperialist secret treaties, fed the working class on promises, did literally nothing, and preserved the state of economic ruin. The Soviets mustered their forces in this period, a period that for us, for the Russian revolution, was a long one;

it was a long period for the Russian revolution but it was a short one from the international point of view, because in most of the leading countries the period of overcoming petty-bourgeois illusions, of compromise by various parties, groups and trends had been taking not months but long decades. The span of time, from April 20 to the moment Kerensky renewed the imperialist war in June (he had the secret imperialist treaty in his pocket), was decisive. This second period included our July defeat and the Kornilov revolt, and only through the experience of the mass struggle, only when the working-class and peasant masses had realised from their own experience and not from sermons that petty-bourgeois compromise was all in vain—only then, after long political development, after long preparations and changes in the moods and views of party groups, was the ground made ready for the October Revolution; only then did the Russian revolution enter the third period of its initial stage, a stage of isolation, or temporary separation, from the world revolution.

This third, or October, period, the period of organisation, was the most difficult; at the same time it was a period of the biggest and most rapid triumphs. After October, our revolution—the revolution that placed power in the hands of the revolutionary proletariat, established its dictatorship and obtained for it the support of the vast majority of the proletariat and the poor peasantry—after October our revolution made a victorious, triumphal advance. Throughout Russia civil war began in the form of resistance by the exploiters, the landowners and bourgeoisie, supported by part of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Civil war broke out, and in that war the forces of the enemies of Soviet power, the forces of the enemies of the working and exploited masses, proved to be insignificant; the civil war was one continuous triumph for Soviet power because its opponents, the exploiters, the landowners and bourgeoisie, had neither political nor economic support, and their attacks collapsed. The struggle against them was not so much a military operation as agitation; section after section, mass after mass, down to the working Cossacks, abandoned the exploiters who were trying to lead them away from Soviet power.

This period of the victorious, triumphal advance of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power, when great masses of the working and exploited people of Russia were drawn to the side of Soviet power definitely and irrevocably—this period constituted the final and highest point of development of the Russian revolution, which had been progressing all this time, apparently, independently of world imperialism. That was the reason why a country which was extremely backward and was the most prepared for the revolution by the experience of 1905 was able to promote one class after another to power rapidly, easily and systematically, getting rid of various political alignments until at last that political structure was reached which was the last word, not only in the Russian revolution, but also in the West-European workers' revolutions, for Soviet power has been consolidated in Russia and has won the absolute sympathy of the working and exploited people because it has destroyed the old state apparatus that was an instrument of oppression and has laid the foundation of a state of a new and higher form of which the Paris Commune was the prototype. The Commune destroyed the old state machine and replaced it by the armed force of the masses themselves, replaced bourgeois parliamentary democracy by the democracy of the working people, which excluded the exploiters and systematically suppressed their resistance.

That is what the Russian revolution did in this period and that is why a small vanguard of the Russian revolution is under the impression that this rapid triumphal advance can be expected to continue in further victory. That is precisely their mistake because the period when the Russian revolution was developing, passing state power in Russia from one class to another and getting rid of class compromise within the bounds of Russia alone—this period-was able to exist historically only because the predatory giants of world imperialism were temporarily halted in their advance against Soviet power. A revolution that overthrew the monarchy in a few days, exhausted all possibilities of compromise with the bourgeoisie in a few months and overcame all the resistance by the bourgeoisie in a civil war of a few weeks, this revolution, the revolution of a socialist republic, could live side by side with the imperialist powers, among the

international plunderers, the wild beasts of international imperialism, only so long as the bourgeoisie, locked in mortal struggle with each other, were paralysed in their offensive against Russia.

And then began the period that we feel so keenly and see before our eyes, the period of disastrous defeats and severe trials for the Russian revolution, the period in which the swift, direct and open offensive against the enemies of the revolution is over while in its place we are experiencing disastrous defeats and have to retreat before forces that are immeasurably greater than ours, before the forces of international imperialism and finance capital, before the military might that the entire bourgeoisie with its modern weapons and its organisation has mustered against us in the interests of plunder, oppression and the strangling of small nations; we had to think of bringing our forces up to their level; we had to face a task of tremendous difficulty, that of direct combat with enemies that differed from Romanov and Kerensky who could not be taken seriously; we had to meet the forces of the international imperialist bourgeoisie, all its military might, we had to stand face to face with the world plunderers. In view of the delay in getting help from the international socialist proletariat we naturally had to take upon ourselves a conflict with these forces and we suffered a disastrous defeat.

And this epoch is one of disastrous defeats, an epoch of retreat, an epoch in which we must save at least a small part of our position by retreating before imperialism, by awaiting the time when there will be changes in the world situation in general, when the forces of the European proletariat arrive, the forces that exist and are maturing but which have not been able to deal with their enemy as easily as we did with ours; it would be a very great illusion, a very great mistake, to forget that it was easy for the Russian revolution to begin but difficult for it to take further steps .This was inevitable because we had to begin with the most backward and most rotten political system. The European revolution will have to begin against the bourgeoisie, against a much more serious enemy and under immeasurably more difficult conditions. It will be much more difficult for the European revolution to begin. We see that it is immeasurably more dif-

ficult to make the first breach in the system that is holding back the revolution. It will be much easier for the European revolution to advance to the second and third stages. Things cannot be different with the alignment of forces of the revolutionary and reactionary classes that at present obtains in the world. This is the main turn in events that is always overlooked by people who view the present situation, the extremely serious position of the revolution, from the standpoint of their own feelings and their indignation, and not from the historical standpoint. Historical experience teaches us that always, in all revolutions, at a time when a revolution takes an abrupt turn from swift victory to severe defeats, there comes a period of pseudo-revolutionary phrasemaking that invariably causes the greatest damage to the development of the revolution. And so, comrades, we shall be able to appraise our tactics correctly only when we set out to consider the turn in events that has hurled us back from swift, easy and complete victories to grave defeats. This is an extremely difficult and extremely serious question arising out of the present turning-point in the development of the revolution, the turn from easy victories within the country to exceptionally heavy defeats without; it is also a turning-point in the entire world revolution, a turn from the period of propaganda and agitation on the part of the Russian revolution, with imperialism biding its time, to the offensive of imperialism against Soviet power, and this turn puts a particularly difficult and acute question before the international movement in Western Europe. If we are not to ignore this historical aspect of the situation we must try to understand how Russia's basic interests in the question of the present harsh, or obscene, as it is called, peace took shape.

When arguing against those who refused to see the need to accept that peace, I have often come up against the statement that the idea of concluding the peace expresses only the interests of the exhausted peasant masses, the declassed soldiers, and so on and so forth. Whenever I hear such statements, whenever I hear such things referred to, I am always amazed that the class aspect of national development is forgotten by comrades—people who limit themselves exclusively to seeking explanations. As though the Party

of the proletariat on taking power had not counted on the alliance of the proletariat and the semi-proletariat, i.e., the-poor peasantry (i.e., the majority of the peasantry of Russia), had not known that only such an alliance would be able to hand the government of Russia over to the revolutionary power of the Soviets, the power of the majority, the real majority of the people, and that without this alliance it would be senseless to make any attempt to establish power, especially at difficult turning-points in history! As though we could now abandon this verity that was accepted by all of us and confine ourselves to a contemptuous reference to the exhausted state of the peasantry and the declassed soldiers! With regard to the exhausted state of the peasantry and the declassed soldiers we must say that the country will offer resistance, and that the poor peasants will be able to offer resistance only in so far as those poor peasants are capable of directing their forces to the struggle.

When we were about to take power in October it was obvious that events were inevitably leading up to it, that the turn towards Bolshevism in the Soviets indicated a turn throughout the country, and that the Bolsheviks must inevitably take power. When we, realising this, took power in October, we said to ourselves and to all the people, very clearly and unequivocally, that it was a transfer of power to the proletariat and the poor peasantry, that the proletariat knew the peasantry would support it—you know yourselves in what—in its active struggle for peace and its readiness to continue the fight against big finance capital. In this we are making no mistake, and nobody who sticks to the concept of class forces and class alignments can get away from the indisputable truth that we cannot ask a country of small peasants, a country that has given much for the European and world revolution, to carry on the struggle in a difficult situation, a most difficult situation, when help from the West-European proletariat has undoubtedly been delayed, although there is no doubt that it is coming to us, as the facts, the strikes, etc., show. That is why I say that such references to the exhaustion of the peasant masses, etc., are made by people who simply have no arguments, who are absolutely helpless when they seek such arguments, and who are quite unable to grasp class relations as a whole, in their

entirety, the relations of the revolution of the proletariat and of the peasant masses; it is only when, at every sharp turn in history, we appraise the class relations as a whole, the relations of all classes, and do not select individual examples and individual cases, that we feel ourselves firmly supported by an analysis of probable facts. I realise full well that the Russian bourgeoisie are today urging us on towards a revolutionary war when it is absolutely impossible for us to have such a war. This is essential to the class interests of the bourgeoisie.

When they shout about an obscene peace and do not say a word about who brought the army to its present state, I realise quite well that it is the bourgeoisie together with the *Dyelo Naroda* people, the Tsereteli and Chernov Mensheviks and their yes-men (*applause*)—I know quite well that it is the bourgeoisie who are bawling for a revolutionary war. Their class interests demand it, their anxiety to see Soviet power make a false move demands it. It is not surprising that this comes from people who, on the one hand, fill the pages of their newspapers with counter-revolutionary scribbling.... (*Voices*: "They've all been suppressed!") Unfortunately, not yet all of them, but we will close them all down. (*Applause*.) I should like to see the proletariat that would allow the counter-revolutionaries, those who support the bourgeoisie and collaborate with them, to continue using the monopoly of wealth to drug the people with their bourgeois opium. There is no such proletariat. (*Applause*.)

I realise, of course, that nothing but shouts, howls and screams about an obscene peace comes from those publications, I realise full well that the people who favour this revolutionary war—from the Constitutional-Democrats to the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries—are those who meet the Germans as they advance and say triumphantly, here come the Germans, and then allow their officers, again wearing their badges of rank, to strut about in the places that have been occupied by the German imperialist invaders. Oh no, I am not a bit surprised at these bourgeois, these collaborators, preaching a revolutionary war. They want Soviet power to be caught in a trap. They have shown their hand, these bourgeois and collaborators. We have seen them and can still see live specimens, we know that in the Ukraine

there are Ukrainian Kerenskys, Ukrainian Chernovs and Ukrainian Tseretelis—there they are, the Vinnichenkos. Those gentlemen, the Ukrainian Kerenskys, Chernovs and Tseretelis, concealed from the people the peace they concluded with the German imperialists, and today they are trying to overthrow Soviet power in the Ukraine with the help of German bayonets. That is what those bourgeois and those collaborators and their accomplices have done. That is what they have done, those Ukrainian bourgeois and collaborators, whose example you have before your very eyes; they concealed and are still concealing their secret treaties from the people, they are attacking Soviet power with the aid of German bayonets. That is what the Russian bourgeoisie want, that is where the bourgeois yes-men are trying to push Soviet power, wittingly or unwittingly; they know that under no circumstances can Soviet power undertake an imperialist war against the might of imperialism at the present moment. That is why it is only in this international situation, in this general class situation, that we can understand the full depth of the mistake of those who, like the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party, have allowed themselves to be carried away by a theory that is common to the history of all revolutions at moments of difficulty, a theory that is half desperation and half empty phrases; according to this theory, instead of taking a sober view of reality and appraising the tasks of the revolution in respect of the internal and external enemy from the standpoint of class forces, you are asked to settle a serious and very grave problem only under the impact of your feelings, merely from standpoint of feelings. The peace is incredibly harsh and shameful. In my statements and speeches I have had occasion to liken it to the Peace of Tilsit that the conqueror Napoleon forced on the Prussian and German peoples after a series of heavy defeats. Yes, the peace is a grave defeat and is humiliating to Soviet power, but if you, proceeding from this, and limiting yourselves to it, appeal to feelings and arouse discontent in an attempt to settle a gigantic historical problem, you will get into that ridiculous and pitiful situation into which the Socialist-Revolutionary Party once got itself, when in 1907, in a situation that was somewhat similar in certain respects, that party also appealed to the feelings

of revolutionaries, when, after our revolution had suffered heavy defeats in 1906 and 1907, Stolypin presented us with the laws on the Third Duma—shameful and extremely difficult conditions of work in one of the rottenest of representative institutions—when our Party, after brief internal wavering (the wavering on the question was greater than it is today), decided the question in this way: we have no right to give way to feelings; no matter how great our indignation and dissatisfaction with the shameful Third Duma, we have to recognise that it was not chance but the historical necessity of a developing class struggle which lacked the strength to continue but which could muster that strength even in the shameful conditions that have been imposed. We proved to be right. Those who tried to attract people by revolutionary phrases, by appeals to justice (since they were expressing feelings that were trebly legitimate)—those people were given a lesson that will not be forgotten by any revolutionary capable of thought and possessing ideas.

Revolutions do not go smoothly enough to ensure rapid and easy progress. There has never been any great revolution, even on a national scale, that did not experience a hard period of defeat, and the attitude of a revolutionary towards the serious question of mass movements, of developing revolutions, must not be one of declaring the peace obscene and humiliating and then saying he cannot reconcile himself to it; it is not sufficient to quote agitational phrases, to shower reproaches on us because of the peace—that is the known ABC of the revolution, the experience of all revolutions. Our experience since 1905—and if we are rich in anything, if there is any reason why the Russian working class and poor peasantry have taken upon themselves the most difficult and honourable task of beginning the world socialist revolution, it is because the Russian people have been able, owing to specific historical conditions, to make two great revolutions at the beginning of the twentieth century—we have to learn from the experience of those revolutions, we have to learn to understand that only by studying the changes in the class connections between one country and another is it possible to prove definitely that we are in no condition to accept battle at the moment; we have to take this into consideration and say to ourselves,

whatever respite we may obtain, no matter how unstable, no matter how brief, harsh and humiliating the peace may be, it is better than war, because it gives the masses a breathing-space, because it provides us with an opportunity to correct what the bourgeoisie have done, the bourgeoisie that are shouting wherever they have an opportunity to shout, especially under the protection of the Germans in the occupied regions.

The bourgeoisie are shouting that the Bolsheviks are responsible for the disintegration of the army, that there is no army and the Bolsheviks are to blame for it; but let us look at the past, comrades, let us look, firstly, at the development of our revolution. Do you not know that desertion and the disintegration of our army began long before the revolution, in 1916, and that everybody who has seen the army will have to admit that? And what did our bourgeoisie do to prevent it? Is it not clear that the only chance for salvation from the imperialists at that time was in their hands, that a chance presented itself in March and April, when Soviet organisations could have taken power by a simple motion of the hand against the bourgeoisie. And if the Soviets had then taken power, if the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, together with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, instead of helping Kerensky deceive the people, conceal the secret treaties and lead the army to an offensive—if they had then come to the aid of the army, had supplied it with munitions and rations and had compelled the bourgeoisie to help the fatherland—not the fatherland of the hucksters, not the fatherland of treaties that help to slaughter the people (*applause*)—and had themselves participated; if the Soviets had forced the bourgeoisie to help the fatherland of the workers and all working people, and had helped the ragged, barefoot and hungry army, then, perhaps, we should have had a period of ten months, long enough to rest the army and gain unanimous support for it, so that without the army having moved one step from the front a general, democratic peace could have been proposed, the secret treaties could have been torn up and the line held without retreating a single step. There would then have been a chance of peace, which the workers and peasants would have willingly supported and approved. That would

have been the tactics of the defence of the fatherland, not the fatherland of the Romanovs, Kerenskys, or Chernovs, a fatherland with secret treaties, a fatherland of the treacherous bourgeoisie—not that fatherland but the fatherland of the working people. That is who is responsible for having made the transition from war to revolution and from the Russian revolution to world socialism a period of severe trials. That is why such proposals as a revolutionary war sound like empty phrases, when we know that we have no army, when we know that it would have been impossible to hold the army, and people with a knowledge of the situation could not help seeing that our decree on demobilisation was not an invention but the result of obvious necessity, because it would have been impossible to hold the army. The army could not have been held. That officer, not a Bolshevik, was right who, before the October Revolution, said that the army could not and would not fight.[80] This is what has come of months of bargaining with the bourgeoisie and of all the speeches about the need to continue the war; no matter what noble sentiments on the part of many revolutionaries, or of few revolutionaries, may have dictated them, they proved to be empty revolutionary phrases that played into the hands of international imperialism so that it could plunder as much again and more, just as it has been doing since our tactical or diplomatic error, since the time we did not sign the Brest Treaty. When we told those who opposed concluding peace that if we had a respite of any length they would realise that the recuperation of the army and the interests of the working people were more important than anything else, and that peace should have been concluded for this reason—they maintained that there could be no respite.

But our revolution differs from all previous revolutions in having aroused among the masses a desire to build and create, and the working people in the most out-of-the-way villages, people humiliated, downtrodden and oppressed by tsars, landowners, and bourgeoisie, have been aroused; this is a period of the revolution that is only now being accomplished, now that the rural revolution is under way, the revolution that is building a new way of life. And for the sake of this respite, no matter how brief and how small

it may be, it was our duty to sign the treaty, since we place the interests of the working people above the interests of the bourgeois warriors who rattle their sabres and call on us to fight. That is what the revolution teaches. The revolution teaches that when we make diplomatic mistakes, when we assume that the German workers will come to our aid tomorrow, when we hope that Liebknecht will be victorious immediately (and we know that one way or another Liebknecht will win, that is inevitable in the development of the working-class movement [*applause*]), it means that, when used unthinkingly, the revolutionary slogans of the difficult socialist movement turn into empty phrases. There is not a single representative of the working people, there is not a single honest worker who would refuse to make the greatest sacrifice to help the socialist movement of Germany, because during all this time at the front he has learned to distinguish between the German imperialists and the soldiers tormented by German discipline, most of whom are in sympathy with us. That is why I say that the Russian revolution has corrected our mistake in practice, has corrected it by giving us the respite. It is very probable that it will be an extremely brief one, but we have the chance of at least a brief respite in which the army, worn out and hungry as it is, will become conscious of the fact that it has been given an opportunity to recuperate. It is clear to us that the period of the old imperialist wars is over and we are threatened with the further horrors of an outbreak of fresh wars, but there have been such periods of war in many historical epochs, and they have always become most fierce towards the end. This must be understood, not only at meetings in Petrograd and Moscow; it must be understood by the many tens of millions in the countryside; and the more enlightened part of the rural population, those returning from the front, those who have experienced the horrors of war, must help them understand it; the huge masses of peasants and workers must become convinced of the necessity for a revolutionary front—they will then say we have acted correctly.

They tell us we have betrayed the Ukraine and Finland—what disgrace! But the situation that has arisen is such that we are cut off from Finland, with whom we concluded an unwritten treaty before the revolution and have now con-

cluded a formal treaty.[81] They say we are surrendering the Ukraine, which Chernov, Kerensky and Tsereteli are going to ruin; they say we are traitors, we have betrayed the Ukraine! I say: Comrades, I've seen enough of the history of revolution not to be embarrassed by the hostile glances and shouts of people who give way to their feelings and are incapable of clear judgement. I will give you a simple example. Suppose that two friends are out walking at night and they are attacked by ten men. If the scoundrels isolate one of them, what is the other to do? He cannot render assistance, and if he runs away is he a traitor? And suppose that it is not a matter of individuals or of spheres in which questions of direct feelings are being settled, but of five armies, each a hundred-thousand strong, that surround an army of two hundred thousand, and that there is another army that should come to the embattled army's assistance. But if that second army knows that it is certain to fall into a trap, it should withdraw; it must withdraw, even if the retreat has to be covered by the conclusion of an obscene, foul peace —curse as much as you like, but it is necessary to conclude the peace. There is no reason for considering the feelings of a duelist who draws his sword and says that he must die because he is being compelled to conclude a humiliating peace. But we all know that, however we may decide, we have no army, and no gestures will save us from the necessity of withdrawing to gain time and enable our army to recuperate; everybody who looks reality in the face and does not deceive himself with revolutionary phrase-making will agree with this. Anyone who faces the facts without blinding himself with phrase-making and arrogance must know this.

If we know this, it is our revolutionary duty to conclude even this harsh, super-harsh and rapacious treaty, for by so doing we shall reach a better position for ourselves and for our allies. Did we actually lose anything by concluding the peace treaty of March 3? Anyone who wants to look at things from the point of view of mass relations, and not from that of the aristocratic duelist, will realise that without an army, or having only the sick remnant of an army, it would be self-deception, it would he the greatest deception of the people, to accept battle and call it a revolutionary

war. It is our duty to tell the people the truth; yes, the peace is a harsh one. The Ukraine and Finland are perishing but we must accept this peace and all class-conscious working people in Russia will accept it because they know the unvarnished truth, they know the meaning of war, they know that to stake everything on one card on the assumption that the German revolution will begin immediately is self-deception. By concluding peace we have obtained what we gave our Finnish friends—a respite, help and not destruction.

I know of examples from history of much more rapacious peace treaties having been concluded, treaties that surrendered viable nations to the mercy of the conqueror. Let us compare our peace to the Peace of Tilsit; the Peace of Tilsit was enforced on Prussia and Germany by a conqueror. That peace was so harsh that not only were all the capital cities of all the German states seized, not only were the Prussians thrown back to Tilsit, which would be the same as throwing us back to Omsk or Tomsk; not only that—the worst of all was that Napoleon compelled the conquered peoples to supply him with auxiliary troops for his wars; but nevertheless, when the situation became such that the German peoples had to withstand the attacks of the conqueror, when the epoch of revolutionary wars in France gave place to the epoch of imperialist wars of conquest, then came the revelation which those people who wax enthusiastic over empty phrases do not want to understand, those people, that is, who picture the conclusion of peace as a downfall. This psychology is understandable in an aristocratic duelist but not in a worker or peasant. The latter has been through the hard school of war and has learned to calculate. There have been even greater trials, and nations even more backward have come through them. Harsher peace treaties have been concluded, the Germans concluded one in an epoch when they had no army, or when their army was sick like ours. They concluded a very harsh peace with Napoleon. But that peace was not the downfall of Germany—on the contrary, it was the turning-point, national defence, renewal. We are on the eve of just such a turning-point and are experiencing analogous conditions. We must look truth in the face and banish all empty phrases and declarations. We

must say, peace, if it is necessary, must be concluded. The war of liberation, the class war, the war of the people will take the place of the Napoleonic wars. The system of the Napoleonic wars will change, war will give place to peace and peace to war, and from every harsh peace there has always emerged a more extensive preparation for war. The harshest of peace treaties—the Peace of Tilsit—has gone down in history as a turning-point towards the time when the German people began to swing round; when they retreated to Tilsit, to Russia, they were actually gaining time, waiting for the international situation that had, at one time, favoured Napoleon—he was another plunderer like Hohenzollern or Hindenburg—waiting until the situation changed, until the mentality of the German people, tormented by decades of Napoleonic wars and defeats, had recuperated and the German people were resuscitated. That is what history teaches us, that is why all despair and empty phrases are criminal, that is why everyone will say yes, the old imperialist wars are ending—an historical turning-point has come.

Our revolution has been one long triumph since October, and now the lengthy times of hardship have come, we do not know for how long, but we do know that it will be a long and difficult period of defeats and retreats, because the alignment of forces is what it is, because by retreating we shall give the people a chance to recuperate. We shall make it possible for every worker and peasant to realise the truth that will enable him to understand that new wars waged by the imperialist plunderers against the oppressed peoples are beginning, and every worker and peasant will realise that we must rise in defence of the fatherland, because we have been defencists since October. Since October 25 we have said openly that we stand for the defence of the fatherland, because we have a fatherland, the one from which we have driven the Kerenskys and Chernovs, because we have torn up the secret treaties, because we have crushed the bourgeoisie—badly so far, but we shall learn to do it better.

Comrades, there is another important difference between the condition of the German people and of the Russian people who have suffered a severe defeat at the hands of the

German invaders—there is a tremendous difference that must be mentioned, although I have already touched upon it briefly in the preceding part of my speech. Comrades, when the German people, over a hundred years ago, entered a period of the most cruel wars of conquest, a period when they had to retreat and conclude one shameful treaty after another before they were awakened—at that time the German people were weak and backward, just that and nothing more. They had against them not only the military forces and the might of the conqueror Napoleon, they had against them a country that was far above Germany in the revolutionary and political sense and in every other respect, a country that had risen far above all others, a country that had reached the top. That country was far above the people who were languishing in subjection to the imperialists and landowners. A people that, I repeat, had been nothing but a weak and backward people, managed to learn from its bitter lessons and to raise itself up. We are in a better position; we are not merely a weak and backward people, we are the people who have been able—not because of any special services or of historical predestination, but because of a definite conjunction of historical circumstances—who have been able to accept the honour of raising the banner of the international socialist revolution. (*Applause.*)

I am well aware, comrades, that the banner is in weak hands, I have said that outright several times already, and the workers of the most backward country will not be able to hold that banner unless the workers of all advanced countries come to their aid. The socialist reforms that we have accomplished are far from perfect, they are weak and insufficient; they will serve as a guide to the advanced West-European workers who will say to themselves, "The Russians haven't made a very good beginning on the job that has to be done"; the important thing is that our people are not merely a weak and backward people as compared with the Germans, they are the people who have raised the banner of revolution. Although the bourgeoisie of any country you like are filling the columns of their press with slander of the Bolsheviks, although the voice of the imperialist press in France, Britain, Germany, etc., curses the Bolsheviks in unison, you will not find a meeting of workers in any country at

which the names and slogans of our socialist government give rise to bursts of indignation. (*Voice*: "That's a lie!") No, it is not, it is the truth, and anyone who has been in Germany, Austria, Switzerland or America during the past few months will tell you it is the truth and not a lie, that the names and slogans of representatives of Soviet power in Russia are greeted with the greatest enthusiasm by the workers and that, despite all the lies of the bourgeoisie of Germany, France, etc., the working-class masses have realised that no matter how weak we may be, their cause is being served here in Russia. Yes, our people have a very heavy burden to bear, the burden they have themselves taken up; but a people that has been able to establish Soviet power cannot perish. Again I repeat—there is not a single politically conscious socialist, not a single worker among those who think over the history of the revolution, who can dispute the fact that Soviet power—despite all the defects that I know only too well and fully appreciate—is the highest type of state, the direct successor to the Paris Commune. It has ascended a step higher than the other European revolutions so that we are not experiencing the difficult conditions that the German people experienced a hundred years ago; the change in the balance of forces among the plunderers, taking advantage of the conflict and satisfying the demands of plunderer Napoleon, plunderer Alexander I and the plundering British monarchy—that was the only thing left, the one chance, for the German people, oppressed by feudalism; and yet the German people did not perish from the Peace of Tilsit. But we, I say again, have better conditions, we have a powerful ally in all West-European countries, the international socialist proletariat, the proletariat that is on our side no matter what our enemies may say. (*Applause*.) True, it is not easy for that ally to raise his voice, any more than it was easy for us until the end of February 1917. That ally is living in the underground, under conditions of the military prison into which all imperialist countries have been turned, but he knows us and understands our cause; it is difficult for him to come to our aid, and Soviet troops, therefore, will need much time and patience and will have to go through many trials before the time comes when he will aid us—we shall use even the slightest chance of procrastination, for

time is working on our side. Our cause is gaining strength, the forces of the imperialists are weakening, and no matter what trials and defeats may emerge from the "Tilsit" peace, we are beginning the tactics of withdrawal and, once more I say it, there is no doubt the politically-conscious proletariat and, likewise, the politically-conscious peasants are on our side, and we shall be able not only to make heroic attacks, but also to make a heroic retreat and we shall wait until the international socialist proletariat comes to our aid and shall then begin a second socialist revolution that will be world-wide in its scope. (*Applause*.)

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3

REPLY TO THE DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON RATIFICATION OF THE PEACE TREATY
MARCH 15

Comrades, had I desired to find a confirmation of what was said in my first speech about the nature of the revolutionary war that was proposed to us, the best and clearest confirmation would have been given me by the report of the representative of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.[82] I think it will be most expedient if I quote his speech from the verbatim report and we shall see what arguments they adduce in confirmation of their propositions.

Here is a specimen of the arguments on which they rely. There has been talk here of the volost gathering.[83] Those who consider this meeting a volost gathering can resort to such arguments, but it is clear that these people are repeating our words but are incapable of thinking them out. People repeat what the Bolsheviks taught the Left S.R.s when the latter were still among the Rights, and when they speak it is evident that they have learnt by rote what we said, but they have not understood on what it was based, and now they repeat it. Tsereteli and Chernov were defencists, and now we are defencists, we are "traitors", we are "betrayers". The accomplices of the bourgeoisie speak here about a volost gathering—they make eyes when they say this—but every worker understands very well the aims of the defencism by which Tsereteli and Chernov were guided and the grounds which cause us to be defencists.

If we were to support the Russian capitalists who wanted to be given the Dardanelles, Armenia and Galicia, as it was written in the secret treaty, that would be defencism

in the spirit of Chernov and Tsereteli, and that defencism was disgraceful then, but now our defencism is honourable. (*Applause.*)

And when, alongside such arguments, in the verbatim report of Kamkov's speech I find twice repeated the statement that the Bolsheviks are agents of German imperialism (*applause from the Right*), a harsh term—I am very glad that all those who pursued Kerensky's policy emphasise it by their applause. (*Applause.*) And indeed, of course, it is not for me to object to harsh words. I shall never raise any objection to that. Only, in order to be harsh one must have the right to be so, and the right to be harsh is given by one's words not differing from one's deeds. That is the little condition which many intellectuals do not appreciate, but which the workers and peasants have grasped even at volost gatherings—it is such a meagre thing, the volost gathering—they have grasped it both at volost gatherings and in Soviet organisations, and their word does not differ from their deed. But we are very well aware that they, the Left S.R.s, remained in the party of the Right S.R.s until October, during the time when the latter were sharing the rewards of office, when they acted as agents because they had been promised ministerial posts in return for keeping silent about the secret treaties. (*Applause.*) But it is quite impossible to call agents of imperialism people who actually proclaimed war against it, tore up the treaties and undertook the risk that this involved, undertook to drag out the negotiations in Brest, knowing that this would ruin the country, endured the military attack and a series of unprecedented defeats, and did not conceal the slightest thing from the people.

Martov has assured us here that he has not read the treaty. Let those who like to, believe him. We know that these people are accustomed to read a lot of newspapers, but they have not read the treaty. (*Applause.*) Let those who wish, believe it. But I tell you that, while the party of the S.R.s knows very well that we are giving way in the face of violence, which has been fully exposed by us, that we are doing so deliberately, frankly saying that we are unable to fight just now but are giving way—history knows of a number of most shameful treaties and a number of wars—when people in reply to this produce the word "agents", this harshness

exposes them, and when they assure us that they disclaim responsibility for what they are doing—is it not hypocrisy, when people disclaim responsibility but continue to be in the government? I maintain that when they say that they disclaim responsibility—they do not divest themselves of it, and they are quite wrong in thinking this is a volost gathering. No, this is everything that is honest and best among the working masses. (*Applause.*) This is no bourgeois parliament to which people are elected once or twice a year to take their seats and receive a salary. These are people sent from the provinces and tomorrow they will be in the provinces and will relate that if the party of Left S.R.s is losing votes, it deserves to, because the party which acts in this way is the same soap bubble among the peasantry as it proved to be among the working class. (*Applause*, *voices*: "Quite right.")

Further, I will quote you one more passage from Kamkov's speech to show how every representative of the working and exploited people reacts to it. "When yesterday Comrade Lenin asserted here that Comrades Tsereteli and Chernov and others had demoralised the army, can we really not find the courage to say that Lenin and I also demoralised the army?" He is a long way wide of the mark. (*Applause.*) He has heard that we were defeatists, and he has recalled this when we have ceased to be defeatists. He has recalled it at the wrong time. They have learnt the word by heart, they have a revolutionary-sounding toy rattle to play with, but they are incapable of giving some thought to the actual state of affairs. (*Applause.*) I assert that out of a thousand volost gatherings where Soviet power has been consolidated, in more than nine hundred there are people who will tell the Party of Left S.R.s that they do not deserve any confidence. They will say—all right; we demoralised the army and we must recall that now. But how did we demoralise the army? We were defeatists at the time of the tsar, but at the time of Tsereteli and Chernov we were not defeatists. We published in Pravda a proclamation which Krylenko, who was then still being persecuted, addressed to the army: "Why I am going to Petrograd." He said: "We are not calling on you for mutinies." That was not demoralisation of the army. Those who declared this war to be a great war were the ones who demoralised the army.

It was Tsereteli and Chernov who demoralised the army because they spoke grand words to the people, words which many Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were accustomed to throw out at random. It is easy to play with words, but the Russian people at volost gatherings are accustomed to think over them and take them seriously. If, however, the people were told that we were striving for peace and discussing the conditions of the imperialist war, then I ask: and what about the secret treaties and the June offensive? That is how they demoralised the army. If they spoke to the people about the struggle against the imperialists, about defence of the homeland, the people asked themselves: do they seize the capitalists by the scruff of the neck somewhere?—that is how they demoralised the army, and that is why I said, and no one has refuted it, it would have been the salvation of the army if we had taken power in March or April, and if instead of the furious hatred of the exploiters because we suppressed them—they quite justifiably hate us—if instead of this they had put the interests of the homeland of the working and exploited people higher than the interests of the homeland of Kerensky and Ryabushinsky's secret treaties, and of designs on Armenia, Galicia and the Dardanelles, that would have spelt salvation. And in this connection—beginning with the great Russian Revolution, and especially from March, when a half-hearted appeal to the peoples of all countries[84] was issued—the government, which issued the appeal that called for the overthrow of the bankers of all countries, was itself sharing profits and favours with the bankers—that is what demoralised the army and why the army could not keep going. (*Applause.*)

And I assert that we—beginning from this appeal of Krylenko's, which was not the first,[85] and which I am recalling because it stuck in my mind—we did not demoralise the army but said: hold the front—the sooner you take power the easier will it be to retain it, and to say now: we are against civil war and for an uprising—how unworthy this is and how despicable this chatter of some people. When this reaches the countryside and when the soldiers there, who have seen war not as the intellectuals have, and who know that it is easy to wave only a cardboard sword, when they say that at the critical moment they, unshod, badly clothed and

suffering, were helped by being driven into an offensive—they are now being told that it doesn't matter that there will be no army, there will be an uprising instead. To drive the people against a regular army with superior technical equipment—that is criminal, and we, as socialists, taught that it is so. Indeed, the war taught a great deal, not only that people suffered, but also that those who have the greatest technical equipment, organisation and discipline, and the best machines, will gain the upper hand; the war taught this, and it is excellent that it did so. It has to be learnt that it is impossible to live in modern society without machines, without discipline—one has either to master modern techniques or be crushed. Years of most painful suffering have taught the peasants what war is. And when anyone goes speech-making at the volost gatherings, when the party of Left S.R.s goes there, they will receive well-merited punishment. (*Applause.*)

One more example, another quotation from Kamkov's speech. (*He reads it.*)

It is sometimes surprisingly easy to raise questions; only there is a saying—an impolite, rude one—which refers to such questions—I'm afraid I can't change the proverb—I will remind you of it: one fool can ask more questions than ten wise men can answer.

Comrades, in the quotation I have just read out I am invited to answer the question: will the respite last one week, two weeks, or will it last more? I assert that at any volost gathering or at any factory a person who in the name of a serious party comes out with such a question will be laughed at by the people and chased away, because at any volost gathering they will understand that there is no point in raising questions about something that cannot be known. That will be understood by any worker and peasant. (*Applause.*) If you absolutely insist on an answer, I will tell you that of course any Left S.R. who writes in the newspapers or speaks at meetings will say what this duration depends on: it depends on when Japan attacks, with what forces, and what resistance it encounters; on the extent to which the Germans get into difficulties in Finland, in the Ukraine; on when the offensive on all fronts begins; on how it develops; on the further course of the internal conflict

in Austria and Germany, and on many other things as well. (*Applause.*)

Therefore, when at a serious meeting people with an air of triumph raise the question: answer me, what kind of a respite will it be?—I say that such people will be chased out of workers' and peasants' meetings by those who understand that after three years of war torment, every week of respite is a very great boon. (*Applause.*) And I assert that whatever the abuse now heaped on us here, if tomorrow all the abusive terms addressed to us from the Rights, almost-Rights, near-Rights, Left S.R.s, Cadets, and Mensheviks were collected together and published, even if some hundreds of poods were the result, as far as I am concerned all this would weigh as light as a feather compared with the fact that among us in the Bolshevik group nine-tenths of its representatives have said: we know war and we see that now, when we have secured this short respite, it is an advantage for the recovery of our sick army. And at every peasant meeting nine-tenths of the peasants will say what everyone who concerns himself with the matter knows, and when able to help in any way we have not rejected and do not reject any practical proposal.

We have gained the possibility of a respite, even if only for twelve days, thanks to the policy which has countered revolutionary phrase-making and "public" opinion. When Kamkov and the Left S.R.s play a game with you and make eyes at you, then, on the one hand, they are making eyes at you and, on the other, they are saying to the Constitutional-Democrats: put that down in our favour, indeed, we are heart and soul with you. (*Voice from the hall*: "It's a lie.") And when one of the representatives of the S.R.s, apparently not even of the Lefts, but of the super-Lefts, a Maximalist, spoke about phrase-making, he said that phrase-making was everything that concerned honour. (*A voice*: "Quite right.") Well, of course, in the Right-wing camp they call out "quite right"; this exclamation is pleasanter to me than the exclamation "it's a lie", although that does not impress me in the slightest either. But if I were to accuse them of phrase-making without giving any clear and precise confirmation of it, but the fact is I quoted two examples and I took them not from my imagination but from actual occurrence.

Remember, were not the representatives of the S.R.s

in the same situation when in 1907 they gave their signatures to Stolypin that they would faithfully and truly serve the Emperor Nicholas II? I hope that I have learnt something from the long years of the revolution, and when I am defamed by accusations of treachery, I say: one must first of all be able to find one's way in history. If we wanted to alter the course of history and it turns out that it was we who altered course and not history—then execute us. History is not to be convinced by speeches, and history will show that we were right, that we brought the workers' organisations into the Great October Revolution of 1917, but only thanks to the fact that we rose above phrase-making and knew how to look at the facts, to learn from them. And when now, on March 14-15, it has become clear that if we had fought we should have helped imperialism, we should have finally wrecked the transport system and lost Petrograd—we see that to play with words and wave a cardboard sword is useless. But when Kamkov comes to me and asks "will this respite be for long?", it is impossible to give an answer because internationally there has not been an objective revolutionary situation. There cannot be a long respite for reaction now, because the objective situation is everywhere revolutionary, because everywhere the working-class masses are indignant, are at the limit of their patience, at the limit of exhaustion from the war; that is a fact. It is impossible to escape from this fact, and therefore I have been proving to you that there was a period when the revolution went ahead and we went in front and the Left S.R.s stepped out perkily behind us. (Applause.) But now a period has begun when we have to retreat in the face of overwhelming force. That is an absolutely concrete description. No one will rebut me on this. Historical analysis is bound to confirm it. Here you have our Marxist, almost Marxist, Martov, speaking ill of the volost gathering; he speaks ill of the closing down of newspapers; he boasts that the oppressed and offended newspapers were closed down because they were helping to overthrow Soviet power, he speaks ill of.... About this he does not keep silent. Such things he sets before you, but an attempt to answer the historical question put point-blank by me, whether it is the truth or not that since October we have made a triumphant advance.... (*Voices from the Right*: "No.") You say "no",

but all these say "yes". I ask: can we now make a victorious advance in an offensive against world imperialism. We cannot, and everyone knows it. When this, a frank simple statement, is made forthrightly in order to teach people revolution—revolution is a profound, difficult and complex science—in order to teach both the workers and the peasants, the people who are making the revolution, how to do so, our enemies cry out: cowards, traitors, the flag has been abandoned; they fall back on words, they wave their arms. No. The whole history of revolutions has shown many such revolutionary phrase-mongers and nothing is left of them but stench and smoke. (*Applause.*)

Another example I cited, comrades, was that of Germany, of Germany which was crushed by Napoleon, of Germany which witnessed shameful peace alternating with wars. I am asked: are we going to observe the treaties for a long time? If it were a three-year-old child who asked me: are you going to observe the treaty or not?—it would be both pleasant and naïve. But when grown-up Kamkov of the party of Left S.R.s asks it, I know a few adult workers and peasants will believe in the naïveté, but the majority of them will say: "Stop being hypocritical." For the historical example I cited shows as clearly as can be that emancipatory wars of peoples that have lost an army—and that has happened more than once—of peoples crushed to the extent of complete loss of all their territory, crushed to such an extent that they have surrendered auxiliary corps to the conqueror for new annexationist campaigns—cannot be struck out of history, and can in no way be erased. If, however, the Left S.R. Kamkov, in rebutting me, said, as I saw in the verbatim report: "In Spain, however, there were revolutionary wars," he thereby confirmed what I am saying, indeed he hit out at himself. Spain and Germany precisely confirm my example that to decide the question of the historical period of annexationist wars on the basis of "are you going to observe the treaty and, when you violate it, when will they catch you...?" is indeed worthy of children. History tells us that every treaty results from a cessation of struggle and a change in the relationship of forces, that there have been peace treaties which were shattered in a few days, that there have been peace treaties which were shattered after a month, that there were

periods of many years when Germany and Spain concluded peace and violated it after a few months, violated it several times, and in a series of wars the peoples learnt what waging war means. When Napoleon led German armies in order to strangle other peoples he taught them revolutionary war. Such was the course of history.

That is why I tell you, comrades, that I am deeply convinced that the decision adopted by nine-tenths of our Bolshevik group[86] will be approved by nine-tenths of all the politically-conscious working people of Russia—workers and peasants. (*Applause.*)

We have a means of checking whether I spoke the truth or whether I am mistaken, for you will go into the provinces and each one of you will report to the local Soviets, and everywhere there will be local decisions. I will say in conclusion: do not succumb to provocation. The bourgeoisie knows what it is doing, the bourgeoisie knows why it rejoiced in Pskov, rejoiced recently in Odessa, the bourgeoisie of the Vinnichenkos, of the Ukrainian Kerenskys, of Tsereteli and Chernov. It rejoiced because it understood perfectly what a tremendous mistake in diplomacy, in taking account of the situation, Soviet power had committed by trying to wage war with a fleeing, sick army. The bourgeoisie is trying to draw you into the pitfall of war. One has not only to attack but also to retreat. Every soldier knows that. Realise that the bourgeoisie is trying to draw both you and us into a trap. Realise that the whole bourgeoisie and all its voluntary and involuntary accomplices are setting this trap. You will be able to endure the most severe defeats and to maintain the most difficult positions, and by retreating to gain time. Time is on our side. The imperialists, having glutted themselves, will burst, and in their womb a new giant is developing; it is growing more slowly than we should like, but it is growing, it will come to our aid, and when we see that it is beginning to strike its first blow, we shall say: the time for retreat has come to an end, the era of the world offensive and the era of the victory of the world socialist revolution is beginning. (*Stormy applause, continuing for a long time.*)

Pravda No. 49
March 19, 1918

Published according to
the verbatim report,
collated with the *Pravda* text

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RESOLUTION ON RATIFICATION OF THE BREST TREATY

The Congress confirms (ratifies) the peace treaty signed by our representatives at Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918.

The Congress recognises as correct the actions of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars in deciding to conclude the present incredibly harsh, rapacious and humiliating peace in view of our having no army and of the extreme war weariness of the people, who in their distress have received no support from the bourgeoisie and bourgeois intelligentsia, but have seen that distress made use of for selfish class purposes.

The Congress also recognises the undoubted correctness of the actions of the peace delegation that refused to enter into a detailed discussion on the German peace terms, because those terms were imposed on us in the form of an obvious ultimatum and by undisguised force.

The Congress most insistently urges upon all workers, soldiers and peasants, all the working and oppressed masses, the main, immediate and most urgent task of the moment—the improvement of the discipline and self-discipline of the working people; the creation throughout the country of strong, well-founded organisations that cover, as far as possible, all production and distribution; a ruthless struggle against the chaos, disorganisation and economic ruin which are historically inevitable as the legacy of a most agonising war, but which are, at the same time, the main obstacle to the complete victory of socialism and the strengthening of the foundations of socialist society.

Today, after the October Revolution, after the overthrow of the political power of the bourgeoisie in Russia, after

our denunciation and publication of all secret imperialist treaties, after the cancellation of the foreign loans, after the workers' and peasants' government has proposed a just peace to all peoples without exception, Russia, having escaped from the clutches of the imperialist war, has the right to announce that she is not a participant in the plunder and suppression of other countries.

The Russian Soviet Federative Republic, having unanimously condemned predatory wars, from now on deems it its right and its duty to defend the socialist fatherland against all possible attacks by any of the imperialist powers.

The Congress therefore deems it the unconditional duty of all working people to muster all forces to re-establish and improve the defence potential of our country, to re-establish its military strength on the basis of a socialist militia and the universal military training of all adolescents and adults of both sexes.

The Congress expresses its absolute confidence that Soviet power, which has valiantly fulfilled all the obligations of the international solidarity of the workers of all countries in their struggle for socialism against the yoke of capital, will in future do everything possible to promote the international socialist movement, to secure and shorten the road leading mankind to deliverance from the yoke of capital and from wage slavery, to the creation of a socialist society and to an enduring, just peace between the peoples.

The Congress is firmly convinced that the international workers' revolution is not far away, that the full victory of the socialist proletariat is assured despite the fact that the imperialists of all countries do not hesitate to use the most brutal means for the suppression of the socialist movement.

Pravda (*Sotsial-Demokrat*)
No. 47, March 16, 1918

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the *Pravda* text,
collated with the manuscript

COMMENT ON THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE "LEFT COMMUNISTS"

Since the conclusion of the Brest peace, some comrades who call themselves "Left Communists" have formed an "Opposition" in the Party, and in consequence of this their activity is slipping further and further towards a completely disloyal and impermissible violation of Party discipline.

Comrade Bukharin has refused to accept the post of member of the C.C. to which he was appointed by the Party Congress.

Comrades Smirnov, Obolensky and Yakovleva have resigned from their posts as People's Commissars and as business manager of the Supreme Economic Council.

These are absolutely disloyal, uncomradely actions that violate Party discipline, and such behaviour was and remains a *step towards a split* on the part of the above-mentioned comrades....*

Written in the second half of March 1918

First published in 1929 in *Lenin Miscellany XI*

Published according to the manuscript

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* Here the manuscript breaks off.—*Ed.*

ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE ARTICLE "THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT" [87]

VERBATIM REPORT

CHAPTER X

...* The Soviet press has devoted excessive space and attention to the petty political issues, the personal questions of political leadership by which the capitalists of all countries have striven to divert the attention of the masses from the really important, profound and fundamental questions of our life. In this connection we are faced with the need to solve almost anew a problem for the solution of which all the material requisites are available, only awareness of the urgency of this problem and readiness to solve it being absent. This problem is how to convert the press from an organ mainly devoted to communicating the political news of the day into a serious organ for educating the mass of the population in economics. We shall have to ensure, and we shall ensure, that the press serving the Soviet masses will devote less space to questions of the personal composition of the political leadership, or to questions of the tenth-rate political measures that comprise the commonplace activity and routine work of all political institutions. Instead the press will have to give priority to labour questions in their immediately practical setting. The press must become the organ of the labour commune in the sense of giving publicity to just what the leaders of capitalist enterprises used to try to conceal from the masses. For the capitalist the internal organisation of his enterprise was something veiled by trade

* The beginning of the verbatim report has been lost.—*Ed.*

secrets from the eyes of the outside world, something over which, it seems, he wanted to be omnipotent and in sole command, hidden not only from criticism, not only from outside interference, but also from outside eyes. For the Soviet government, on the contrary, it is the organisation of labour in any particular large enterprises, in any particular village communes that is the chief, fundamental and urgent question of all social life. Our first and main means for increasing the self-discipline of the working people and for passing from the old, good-for-nothing methods of work, or methods of shirking work, in capitalist society, must be the press, revealing shortcomings in the economic life of each labour commune, ruthlessly branding these shortcomings, frankly laying bare all the ulcers of our economic life, and thus appealing to the public opinion of the working people for curing these ulcers. Let there be ten times less newspaper material (perhaps it would be good if there were 100 times less) devoted to so-called current news, but let us have, distributed in hundreds of thousands and millions of copies, a press that acquaints the whole population with the exemplary arrangement of affairs in a few state labour communes which surpass the others. Each factory, each artel and agricultural enterprise, each village that goes over to the new agriculture by applying the law on socialisation of the land, is now, as one of the democratic bases of Soviet power, an independent commune with its own internal organisation of labour. In each of these communes, an increase in the self-discipline of the working people, their ability to work together with managing experts, even from the bourgeois intelligentsia, their achievement of practical results in the sense of raising labour productivity, economising human labour and safeguarding output from the unprecedented thieving from which we are suffering immeasurably at the present time—that is what should form the main content of our Soviet press. That is the way in which we can and must bring it about that the force of example becomes first of all a morally essential, and later a compulsorily introduced, pattern for organising labour in the new Soviet Russia.

In capitalist society there have been repeated examples of the organisation of labour communes by people who hoped

peacefully and painlessly to convince mankind of the advantages of socialism and to ensure its adoption. Such a standpoint and such methods of activity evoke wholly legitimate ridicule from revolutionary Marxists because, under the conditions of capitalist slavery, to achieve any radical changes by means of isolated examples would in fact be a completely vain dream, which in practice has led either to moribund enterprises or to the conversion of these enterprises into associations of petty capitalists.

This habitual attitude of ridicule and scorn towards the importance of example in the national economy is sometimes evident even now among people who have not thoroughly considered the radical changes that began from the time of the conquest of political power by the proletariat. Now, when the land has ceased to be private property, when the factories have almost ceased to be private property and will undoubtedly cease to be such in the very near future (it will be no trouble at all for the Soviet government in its present situation to introduce the appropriate decrees), the example of the labour commune, which solves organisational problems better than any other means, has acquired tremendous significance. It is just now that we must see to it that the mass of unusually valuable material available in the form of the experience of the new organisation of production in individual towns, in individual enterprises, in individual village communes, becomes the possession of the masses.

We are still under considerable pressure from the old public opinion imposed by the bourgeoisie. If we look at our newspapers, it is easy to see what a disproportionately large place we still devote to questions raised by the bourgeoisie, questions with which it seeks to divert the attention of the working people from the concrete practical tasks of socialist reconstruction. We must convert—and we shall convert—the press from an organ for purveying sensations, from a mere apparatus for communicating political news, from an organ of struggle against bourgeois lying—into an instrument for the economic re-education of the masses, into an instrument for telling the masses how to organise work in a new way. Enterprises or village communes which do not respond to any appeals and demands for restoring

self-discipline and raising labour productivity will be entered on a "black list" by the socialist parties and will either be put in the category of sick enterprises in regard to which measures have to be taken for their rehabilitation by means of special arrangements—special steps and statutes—or they will be put in the category of punished enterprises which are liable to closure and whose participants must be handed over to a people's court. Introducing publicity in this sphere will by itself be a vast reform and will serve to draw the broad mass of the people into independent participation in deciding these questions, which most closely concern the masses. The reason why so little has been done in this respect up to now is that what was kept hidden from public knowledge in individual enterprises and communes has remained a secret as of old, which was understandable under capitalism but which is absolutely absurd and senseless in a society that wants to achieve socialism. The force of example, which could not be displayed in capitalist society, will be of enormous importance in a society that has abolished private ownership of land and factories, not only because, perhaps, good examples will be followed here, but also because a better example of the organisation of production will be accompanied inevitably by a lightening of labour and an increase in the amount of consumption for those who have carried out this better organisation. And here, in connection with the importance of the press as an organ for the economic reorganisation and re-education of the masses, we must also touch on the importance of the press in organising competition.

The organisation of competition must take a prominent place among the tasks of the Soviet government in the economic sphere. In their criticism of socialism, bourgeois economists have often declared that socialists deny the importance of competition or give it no place in their system or, as the economists express it, in their plan of social organisation. There is no need to say how stupid is this accusation, which has often been refuted in the socialist press. The bourgeois economists, as always, have confused the question of the specific features of capitalist society with the question of a different form of organisation of competition. The socialists' attacks have never been directed against

competition as such, but only against market competition. Market competition, however, is a special form of competition characteristic of capitalist society and consisting in a struggle of individual producers for a livelihood and for influence, for a place in the market. The abolition of competition as a struggle of producers that is connected only with the market does not at all mean the abolition of competition—on the contrary, the abolition of commodity production and capitalism makes it possible to organise competition in its human instead of its bestial forms. It is just at the present time in Russia, in view of the foundations of political power that have been created by the Soviet Republic, and of the economic characteristics of Russia with her vast expanses and tremendous diversity of conditions—it is just now that organisation of competition on a socialist basis in our country should be one of the most important and rewarding tasks in the reorganisation of society.

We are for democratic centralism. And it must be clearly understood how vastly different democratic centralism is from bureaucratic centralism on the one hand, and from anarchism on the other. The opponents of centralism continually put forward autonomy and federation as a means of struggle against the uncertainties of centralism. As a matter of fact, democratic centralism in no way excludes autonomy, on the contrary, it presupposes the necessity of it. As a matter of fact, even federation, if carried out within limits that are rational from an economic point of view, if it is based on important national distinctions that give rise to a real need for a certain degree of state separateness—even federation is in no way in contradiction to democratic centralism. Under a really democratic system, and the more so with the Soviet organisation of the state, federation is very often merely a transitional step towards really democratic centralism. The example of the Russian Soviet Republic shows us particularly clearly that federation, which we are introducing and will introduce, is now the surest step towards the most lasting union of the various nationalities of Russia into a single democratic centralised Soviet state.

And just as democratic centralism in no way excludes autonomy and federation, so, too, it in no way excludes, but on the contrary presupposes, the fullest freedom of various

localities and even of various communes of the state in developing multifarious forms of state, social and economic life. There is nothing more mistaken than confusing democratic centralism with bureaucracy and routinism. Our task now is to carry out democratic centralism in the economic sphere, to ensure absolute harmony and unity in the functioning of such economic undertakings as the railways, the postal and telegraph services, other means of transport, and so forth. At the same time, centralism, understood in a truly democratic sense, presupposes the possibility, created for the first time in history, of a full and unhampered development not only of specific local features, but also of local inventiveness, local initiative, of diverse ways, methods and means of progress to the common goal. The task of organising competition, therefore, has two aspects: on the one hand, it requires the carrying out of democratic centralism as described above, on the other hand, it makes it possible to find the most correct and most economical way of reorganising the economic structure of Russia. In general terms, this way is known. It consists in the transition to large-scale economy based on machine industry, in the transition to socialism. But the concrete conditions and forms of this transition are and must be diverse, depending on the conditions under which the advance aiming at the creation of socialism begins. Local distinctions, specific eco omic formations, forms of everyday life, the degree of preparedness of the population, attempts to carry out a particular plan—all these are bound to be reflected in the specific features of the path to socialism of a particular labour commune of the state. The greater such diversity—provided, of course, that it does not turn into eccentricity—the more surely and rapidly shall we ensure the achievement of both democratic centralism and a socialist economy. It only remains for us now to organise competition, i.e., to ensure publicity which would enable all communes in the state to learn how economic development has proceeded in various localities; to ensure, secondly, that the results of the advance towards socialism in one commune of the state are comparable with those in another; to ensure, thirdly, that the experience acquired in one commune can be repeated in practice by other communes; to ensure the possibility of

an exchange of those material—and human—forces which have done well in any particular sphere of the national economy or of the state administration. Crushed by the capitalist system, we cannot at present even imagine at all accurately what rich forces lie hidden in the mass of the working people, in the diversity of labour communes of a large state, in the forces of the intelligentsia, who have hitherto worked as lifeless, dumb executors of the capitalists' pre-determined plans, what forces are lying hidden and can reveal themselves given a socialist structure of society. What we have to do is only to clear the way for these forces. If we devote ourselves to the organisation of competition as a matter of state importance, then—provided that Soviet principles of the state system are implemented, provided that private ownership of land, factories, etc., is abolished—the results are inevitably bound to show themselves and will dictate our further forms of construction.

CHAPTER XI

The resolution of the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, which I referred to at the beginning, mentions, among other things, the need to create a harmonious and strong organisation.* At the present time the degree of organisation, both of Soviet institutions and of economic units operating within the bounds of Russia, is extremely low. It could be said that immense disorganisation prevails.

But it would be incorrect to regard this as a state of ruin, collapse and decline. If the bourgeois press makes such an appraisal, it is clear that the interests of the capitalist class compel people to look at things in this way, or rather compel them to appear to look at them thus. In fact, however, anyone who is capable of looking at things at all historically will not doubt for a moment that the present state of disorganisation is a state of transition—of transition from the old to the new—a state of growth of what is new. The transition from the old to the new, if it proceeds as sharply as it has in Russia since February 1917, presupposes of course a gigantic destruction of what has become obsolete and moribund in social life. And it is clear that the search for the new

* See this volume, p. 200.—*Ed.*

cannot at once provide those definite, established, almost fixed and final forms which previously took shape in the course of centuries and lasted for centuries. The present Soviet institutions and the economic organisations which are characterised by the concept of workers' control in industry—those organisations are still in a period of ferment and instability. In these organisations, naturally, the aspect characterised by discussion and the airing of questions at meetings prevails over the business aspect. It could not be otherwise, for without drawing new sections of the people into socialist construction, without awakening to activity the broad masses hitherto asleep, there could be no question of any revolutionary change. The endless discussions and endless holding of meetings—about which the bourgeois press talks so much and so acrimoniously—is a necessary transition of the masses still completely unprepared for social construction, a transition from historical somnolence to new historical creativeness. There is absolutely nothing terrible in the fact that this transition is protracted in some places, or in the fact that the training of the masses in new work does not go forward with the rapidity which could be dreamt of by a man who is accustomed to work in isolation and does not understand what is involved in rousing hundreds, thousands and millions to independent political life. But in realising this we must also realise the turn that is now beginning in this respect. While Soviet institutions had not spread throughout Russia, while socialisation of the land and nationalisation of factories remained an exception to the general rule, it was natural that social management of the national economy (considered on a nation-wide scale) could not emerge from the stage of preliminary discussional preparation either, from the stage of discussion and interpretation. Just now a fundamental change is taking place, Soviet institutions have spread all over Russia.- From Great Russia they have spread to the vast majority of the other nationalities of Russia. Socialisation of the land in the countryside and workers' control in the towns have ceased to be exceptions; instead, they have become the rule.

On the other hand, the extremely critical and even desperate situation the country is in as regards ensuring at least the mere possibility of existence for the majority

of the population, as regards safeguarding it from famine—these economic conditions urgently demand the achievement of definite practical results. The countryside could subsist on its own grain—there is no doubt of that—but it will be able to do so only if in actual fact an absolutely strict account is taken of all existing grain, and if it can be distributed among the whole population with the greatest economy and carefulness. Correct distribution requires correct organisation of transport. But it is transport that has suffered the worst destruction by war. And what is most of all necessary for the revival of transport in a country marked by such huge distances as Russia is harmonious; strong organisation and, perhaps, really millions of people working with the precision of clockwork. Now has come the turning-point when—without in any way ceasing to prepare the masses for participation in state and economic administration of all the affairs of society, and without in any way hindering their most detailed discussion of the new tasks (on the contrary, helping them in every way to carry out this discussion so that they independently think out and arrive at correct decisions)—we must at the very same time begin strictly to separate two categories of democratic functions: on the one hand, discussions and the airing of questions at public meetings, and, on the other hand, the establishment of strictest responsibility for executive functions and absolutely businesslike, disciplined, voluntary fulfilment of the assignments and decrees necessary for the economic mechanism to function really like clockwork. It was impossible to pass to this at once; some months ago it would have been pedantry or even malicious provocation to demand it. Generally speaking, this change cannot be brought about by any decree, by any prescription. But the time has come when the achievement of precisely this change is the pivot of all our revolutionary reforms. Now it has been prepared for, now the conditions for it have matured, now it is impossible to postpone it or wait for it any longer. Not long ago, in discussing the question of the reorganisation and correct planning of railway transport, the question arose of how far one-man managerial authority (which could be called dictatorial) is compatible with democratic organisations in general, with the collective principle in manage-

ment especially, and with the Soviet socialist principle of organisation in particular. Undoubtedly, the opinion is very widely held that there can be no question of such compatibility, that one-man dictatorial authority is incompatible with democracy, the Soviet type of state and collective management. Nothing could be more mistaken than this opinion.

The democratic principle of organisation—in its highest form, in which the Soviets put into effect proposals and demands for the active participation of the masses not only in discussing general rules, decisions and laws, and in controlling their fulfilment, but also directly in their implementation—implies that every representative of the masses, every citizen, must be put in such conditions that he can participate in the discussion of state laws, in the choice of his representatives and in the implementation of state laws. But it does not at all follow from this that we shall permit the slightest chaos or disorder as regards who is responsible in each individual case for definite executive functions, for carrying out definite orders, for controlling a definite joint labour process during a certain period of time. The masses must have the right to choose responsible leaders for themselves. They must have the right to replace them, the right to know and check each smallest step of their activity. They must have the right to put forward any worker without exception for administrative functions. But this does not at all mean that the process of collective labour can remain without definite leadership, without precisely establishing the responsibility of the person in charge, without the strictest order created by the single will of that person. Neither railways nor transport, nor large-scale machinery and enterprises in general can function correctly without a single will linking the entire working personnel into an economic organ operating with the precision of clockwork. Socialism owes its origin to large-scale machine industry. If the masses of the working people in introducing socialism prove incapable of adapting their institutions in the way that large-scale machine industry should work, then there can be no question of introducing socialism. That is why in the period we are now passing through, when the Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat have grown sufficiently

strong, when the main lines of the enemy opposing us, i.e., of the exploiters opposing us, have been sufficiently destroyed or rendered harmless, when the functioning of Soviet institutions has adequately prepared the mass of the population for independent participation in all spheres of social life—at the present moment we are immediately confronted by the tasks of strictly separating discussion and airing questions at meetings from unfailing execution of all instructions of the person in charge. This means separating the necessary, useful preparation of the masses for executing a certain measure and checking up on its execution, which is fully recognised by every Soviet, from the actual execution itself. The masses can now—this is guaranteed them by the Soviets—take all power into their hands and consolidate this power. But to prevent this resulting in the overlapping of authority and irresponsibility from which we are suffering incredibly at the present time, it is necessary that for each executive function we should know precisely what persons, having been chosen to act as responsible leaders, bear responsibility for the functioning of the economic organism as a whole. This requires that as often as possible, when there is the slightest opportunity for it, responsible persons should be elected for one-man management in all sections of the economic organism as a whole. There must be voluntary fulfilment of the instructions of this individual leader, there must be a transition from the mixed form of discussions, public meetings, fulfilment—and at the same time criticism, checking and correction—to the strict regularity of a machine enterprise. The great majority of the labour communes of Russia, the mass of the workers and peasants, are already approaching this task or have already arrived at it. The Soviet government's task is to undertake the role of interpreting the fundamental change that is now beginning and of giving this necessity legal form.

CHAPTER XII

The slogan of practical ability and businesslike methods has enjoyed little popularity among revolutionaries. One can even say that no slogan has been less popular among them. It is quite understandable that as long as the revolutionaries' task consisted in destroying the old capitalist

order they were bound to reject and ridicule such a slogan. For at that time this slogan in practice concealed the endeavour in one form or another to come to terms with capitalism, or to weaken the proletariat's attack on the foundations of capitalism, to weaken the revolutionary struggle against capitalism. Quite clearly, things were bound to undergo a radical change after the proletariat had conquered and consolidated its power and work had begun on a wide scale for laying the foundations of a new, i.e., socialist, society. Now, too, as was pointed out above, we have no right to weaken in the slightest degree either our work of convincing the mass of the population of the correctness of our ideas, or our work of destroying the resistance of the exploiters. But the main thing in the fulfilment of these two functions has already been achieved by us. The chief and urgent requirement now is precisely the slogan of practical ability and businesslike methods. It follows that it is now an immediate, ripe and essential task to draw the bourgeois intelligentsia into our work. It would be ludicrously stupid to regard this drawing in of the intelligentsia as some kind of weakening of the Soviet system, some kind of departure from the principles of socialism or some kind of inadmissible compromise with the bourgeoisie. To express such an opinion would be a meaningless repetition of words that refer to a quite different period of activity of the revolutionary proletarian parties. On the contrary, precisely for fulfilling our revolutionary tasks, precisely in order that these tasks should not remain a utopia or a naïve aspiration but actually become a reality—and be achieved immediately—precisely for the sake of this aim we must now put practical ability and businesslike methods in organisational work as our primary, immediate and chief task. What has to be done just now is to tackle from every aspect the practical erection of the edifice, the plan of which we outlined long ago, the foundations for which we have fought for vigorously enough and firmly enough won, the materials for which we have adequately collected and which now—having provided it with scaffolding and put on working clothes, which we are not afraid of dirtying with any auxiliary materials, and strictly fulfilling the instructions of those in charge of the practical work—we must build and build and build.

The extent to which the changes in the formulation of our tasks are sometimes still not understood is evident. incidentally from the recent discussion on the role of the trade unions.[88] The view was expressed (supported by the Mensheviks, of course, with obviously provocatory aims, that is to say, with the aim of provoking us to take steps advantageous only to the bourgeoisie) that in the interests of preserving and strengthening the class independence of the proletariat the trade unions should not become state organisations. This view was camouflaged by specious and quite customary phrases learnt by heart about the struggle of labour against capital and the necessity for the class independence of the proletariat. In actual fact, however, this view was and is either a bourgeois provocation of the crudest kind or an extreme misunderstanding, a slavish repetition of the slogans of yesterday, as is shown by an analysis of the altered conditions of the present period of history. Yesterday the chief task of the trade unions was the struggle against capital and defence of the class independence of the proletariat. Yesterday the slogan of the day was distrust of the state, for it was the bourgeois state. Today the state is becoming and has become proletarian. The working class is becoming and has become the ruling class in the state. The trade unions are becoming and must become state organisations which have prime responsibility for the reorganisation of all economic life on a socialist basis. Hence to apply the slogans of the old trade unionism to the present epoch would mean renouncing the socialist tasks of the working class.

The same thing has to be said of the co-operatives. A co-operative is a little shop, and no changes, improvements or reforms alter the fact that it is a shop. The capitalist era taught socialists this view. And there is no doubt that these views correctly expressed the essence of the co-operatives as long as they remained a small appendage to the mechanism of the bourgeois system. But the point is that the position of the co-operatives undergoes a fundamental change from the time of the conquest of state power by the proletariat, from the moment that the proletarian state sets about systematic creation of the socialist order. Here quantity passes into quality. The co-operative, as a small island in capitalist society is a little shop. The co-operative, if it

embraces the whole of society, in which the land is socialised and the factories nationalised, is socialism. The task of the Soviet government after the bourgeoisie has been expropriated politically and economically consists obviously (mainly) in spreading co-operative organisations throughout society so as to make every citizen a member of a single nation-wide, or rather state-wide, co-operative. If we brush this task aside by referring to the class character of the workers' co-operatives, we shall prove to be reactionaries, harking back from the era that began with the conquest of political power by the proletariat to the era that existed prior to that conquest. While capitalism existed the political and economic activity of the working class was marked by two tendencies. On the one hand, there was the tendency to settle down fairly comfortably under capitalism, which was feasible only for a small upper stratum of the proletariat. On the other hand, there was the tendency to lead the whole mass of working and exploited people towards the revolutionary overthrow of capital in general. It is clear that when this, second tendency has gained the upper hand, when capital has been overthrown, and it is necessary to begin organising a nation-wide socialist co-operative, our view of the tasks and conditions of the co-operative movement undergoes a fundamental change. We must enter into an agreement with the bourgeois co-operatives as well as with the proletarian co-operatives. We must not be afraid. It would be ridiculous if we were to fear an agreement with the bourgeois co-operatives, for we are the ruling power. We need an agreement enabling us to find practically feasible, convenient and suitable forms of transition from fragmentary, scattered co-operatives to a single, national co-operative. As the state power, we must not be afraid of an agreement with the bourgeois co-operatives, for such an agreement will inevitably mean their subordination to us. At the same time, we have to realise that we represent the new proletarian state power, that the working class has become the ruling class in the state. Hence the workers' co-operative must be at the head of the movement for converting the individual co-operatives into a single, national co-operative. The working class must not isolate itself from the rest of the population; on the contrary, it must lead all sections of the population without

exception in the matter of uniting them one and all in a single, national co-operative. What practical, immediately feasible, transitional measures are required for this is another question. But we must clearly realise and unequivocally decide that the whole point now is precisely this practical transition, that the proletarian state power must undertake it, test all reforms by experience and achieve the transition at all costs.

CHAPTER XIII

In discussing the question of restoring the discipline and self-discipline of the working people, special mention should be made of the important role now devolving on the courts of law. In capitalist society, the court was mainly an instrument of oppression, an instrument of bourgeois exploitation. Hence the bounden duty of the proletarian revolution lay not in reforming the judicial institutions (the task to which the Cadets and their henchmen, the Mensheviks and Right S.R.s, confined themselves), but in completely destroying and razing to its foundations the whole of the old judicial apparatus. The October Revolution fulfilled, and successfully fulfilled, this necessary task. In place of the old court, it began to establish a new, people's court or, rather, Soviet court, based on the principle of the participation of the working and exploited classes—and only of these classes—in administering the state. The new court has been needed first and foremost for the struggle against the exploiters who are trying to restore their domination, or to defend their privileges, or secretly to smuggle through and secure by deception some particle of these privileges. But, in addition, the courts—if they are really organised on the principle of Soviet institutions—have another, still more important task. This task is to ensure the strictest discipline and self-discipline of the working people. We would be ridiculous utopians if we were to imagine that such a task could be carried out on the morrow of the fall of bourgeois rule, i.e., in the first stage of the transition from capitalism to socialism, or—without coercion. It is quite impossible to fulfil this task without coercion. We need the state, we need coercion. The Soviet courts must be the organ of the proletarian state carrying out such coercion. They have

the immense task of educating the population in labour discipline. As yet, exceedingly little, or rather almost nothing, has been done by us in this respect. We must, however, achieve the organisation of such courts on the widest scale, with their activity extending to the entire working life of the country. Only such courts, provided the broad mass of the working and exploited population take part in them, will be able to ensure, through democratic forms conforming to the principles of the Soviet system, that aspirations for discipline and self-discipline do not remain vain aspirations. Only such courts will be able to ensure that we have a revolutionary authority, which we all recognise in words when speaking of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but instead of which we often see around us something as amorphous as jelly. Incidentally, it would be more correct to compare the state of society in which we live now not with a jelly, but with metal that is being melted to prepare a more stable alloy.

Dictated March 28, 1918

First published on April 14, 1929
in *Pravda* No. 86

Published according to
the verbatim report

CONCERNING THE DECREE ON REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNALS[89]

A

TO MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGIUM OF THE COMMISSARIAT FOR JUSTICE, AND A COPY TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE C.E.C.

March 30, 1918

The decree on Soviet tribunals is in my opinion quite wrong and requires radical revision.

It is incorrect to annul the decree on press tribunals without a preliminary summary (and discussion) of the results of their work.

It is incorrect to establish the post of a one-man "tribune" outside the Collegium of the Commissariat for Justice. The result is something like the worst precedents of a "Prosecutor-General".

Instead of devoting attention to reforms of institutions, to petty or almost verbal reforms ("tribune"), attention should be directed to the practical results of the work of the Collegium for Justice in setting up a really revolutionary court that is rapid and mercilessly severe in dealing with counter-revolutionaries, hooligans, idlers and disorganisers.

Lenin

B

DRAFT DECISION OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS

The Council of People's Commissars instructs the Commissariat for Justice to revise the draft decree on tribunals in the direction of abolishing the one-man power of the

"tribune" and laying chief stress not on petty alterations of the institutions set up since October 1917, but on the practical results to be achieved by setting up courts that will act really swiftly and with revolutionary ruthlessness against counter-revolutionaries, bribe-takers, disorganisers and violators of discipline.

The final draft is to be published and submitted to the C.E.C.

First published in 1933
in *Lenin Miscellany XXI*

Published according to
the manuscript

PREFACE TO THE COLLECTED ARTICLES *AGAINST THE STREAM*

The majority of the articles in this publication appeared abroad in *Sotsial-Demokrat* (Central Organ of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party-Bolsheviks), which was issued from the end of 1914 to the beginning of 1917 in Switzerland. Only one large magazine article is taken from the periodical Kommunist[90] (only one issue of which appeared in 1915 in Switzerland).

To understand correctly the connection between the individual articles, one must bear in mind the chronological sequence of their publication in the newspaper.

The articles are divided into two main categories. One part is devoted to an appraisal of the war and the political tasks arising from this appraisal. The other part examines internal Party relations, the struggle of groups, which for a long time seemed to short-sighted people to be "chaos" or a "personal conflict", and which in fact has now led, as everyone can see, to a demarcation of the real socialists from the lackeys of the bourgeoisie, the Lieberdans,[91] Martovs and Co.

Obviously, the first part or first category of articles is incomparably more important. No class-conscious worker who wishes to *understand* the development of the ideas of the international socialist revolution and its first victory on October 25, 1917, can manage without an acquaintance with these articles.

N. Lenin

Written in March 1918

Published in 1918 in the collected articles *Against the Stream*, Publishing House of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies

Published according to the text of the collected articles

THESES ON BANKING POLICY[92]

1. A report to be compiled of what has been received in private banks, including in the report the liquidation of all affairs of each private bank. (Unanimous.)

On the question of how to draw up the report, the following opinions expressed:

(a) The former staff (the Commissariat for the State Bank having the right to remove some employees) of each private bank will be given an ultimatum requiring them to put in order in a very brief period of time all the affairs of the bank and to draw up a balance sheet in final form, firstly for December 14, 1917,[93] and, secondly, for the last day of operations.

(b) Private banks, in fulfilling this function of compiling reports and liquidating all affairs of the bank, act exclusively as branches of the united People's Bank of the Russian Republic and only for the purpose of liquidation, without carrying out any new operations. (Hanecki and Gukovsky and Lenin.)

Special opinion of Spunde:

The balance sheet for 14:XII:1917 should be drawn up by a special commission appointed by us.

No need to draw up another balance sheet.

Further operations, as from 14:XII:1917, to be carried out in the name of the People's Bank.

All private banks, and also the State Bank, to be declared the united People's Bank of the Russian Republic.

2. All the work of compiling reports to be under the supervision of the Commissariat for the State Bank:

The largest possible number of experienced collaborators to be invited, including former employees of the State Bank and private banks.

(Unanimous.)

3. Banking policy, without being confined to nationalisation of the banks, must gradually but steadily be directed towards converting the banks into a single apparatus for accounting and regulation of the socialistically organised economic life of the country as a whole.

Spunde and Lenin in favour.

Gukovsky against.

Hanecki abstains, considers this impossible to carry out.

4. Extraordinary measures for opening the largest possible number of branches of the People's Bank throughout the country.

These branches to be located in towns and villages so as to provide greatest convenience for the public.

Existing branches of former private banks to be used as branches of the People's Bank.

5. Declaration of inviolability of deposits (which, of course, does not diminish the right of the state to levy taxes).

6. Free circulation of cheques.

7. Full preservation of workers' control with regard to withdrawal of money from the banks.

8. Limitation of withdrawals of money for consumer purposes to be retained.

A series of improved facilities for the public to be introduced for the purpose of accelerating deposits of money in the banks and withdrawal of money from the banks, as well as simplification of formalities.

9. Adoption of measures so that the population should keep in the banks all money not absolutely necessary for consumer purposes. Preparation of a law and practical steps for compulsory implementation of this principle.

(Not to be published.)

10. In their activity, all branches of the People's Bank within the bounds of the Federative Russian Soviet Republic are to be guided strictly by the instructions and directives of the central board of management, without having the right to establish any local rules and restrictions. Exceptions are permitted only with the consent of the central board of management.

Written in March or April 1918

First published in 1926 in the magazine *Proletarskaya Revolutsia* No. 6 (53)

Published according to the manuscript

SPEECH AT A MEETING IN THE ALEXEYEVSKY RIDING SCHOOL APRIL 7, 1918[94]

NEWSPAPER REPORT

(*Lenin's appearance on the platform was greeted with a storm of applause.*) We are now passing through the hardest months of the revolution, said Lenin. There is famine, which we must exert all our strength to combat, while the Right S.R.s and Mensheviks look on with malicious joy. Their tactics are the tactics of Dutov and Kornilov, the tactics of the officer cadets who organised an uprising in Moscow against the Soviet government. In this respect the Mensheviks, who are striving to overthrow the Soviet government, are on their side, are on the side of the bourgeoisie, and are thereby betraying us. When we apply the death penalty by shooting, they turn into Tolstoyans and shed crocodile tears, shouting about our cruelty. They have forgotten how, along with Kerensky, they drove the workers into the slaughter, while the secret treaties were hidden in their pockets. They have forgotten this and have turned into meek Christians, fretting about mercy.

We cannot overcome our enemies without arms; they are very well aware of that but all the same they try to discredit us.

We have to put the national economy in order, and this gigantic task is the more difficult because our revolution is the first to have gone so far along the path of social transformation. To lighten this difficult task, we have to learn, but to learn not from books, but from action, from experience. Only Soviet power is any good for building the

national economy, and therefore I am proposing that you should bring thousands of our comrades into the Soviets throughout the country. Besides that, we have to develop comradely discipline. The workers and peasants must realise that the land and factories belong to them and they must be as careful of them as of their own property.

Only now, on looking back and seeing the utter helplessness of the bourgeoisie and the worthlessness of the sabotaging intelligentsia, am I certain of the tremendous progress we have made. In order to continue advancing successfully we must get rid of ignorance and negligence, but it is much more difficult to do that than to overthrow the idiot Romanov or the fool Kerensky.

Germany is strangling us, Japan is attacking us.[95] And it is in this difficult period that the Mensheviks and Right S.R.s, those tender lambs, are shouting about our cruelty, forgetting the gallows that they erected for Comrade Shahumyan.[96] In reply to them, I can say: No, we do not reject the use of force by us against the exploiters.

These tears of the Mensheviks and Right S.R.s evoked by our cruelty are their last attempt at taking part in the political life of the country and at the same time a sign of their weakness. We shall fight them mercilessly. We have to pay now for all the legacy of tsarism, for Nicholas's and Kerensky's rule. When, however, we have conquered disorganisation and apathy, then by our unceasing work we shall achieve the great victory of socialism. (*Loud applause.*)

Izvestia Saratovskovo Soveta
No. 71,
April 13, 1918

Published according to the newspaper text

DIRECTIVES TO THE VLADIVOSTOK SOVIET [97]

The following telegram must be sent by the direct line to Irkutsk (for Vladivostok):

We consider the situation very serious and issue the most categorical warning to the comrades. Do not harbour any illusions: the Japanese will certainly attack. That is inevitable. Probably all the Allies without exception will help them. Hence it is necessary to begin preparations without the least delay and to prepare seriously, exerting every effort. Above all, attention must be devoted to correct withdrawal, retreat, and removal of stores and railway materials. Do not set yourselves unrealisable aims. Prepare to sap and blow up railway lines, and to remove rolling stock and locomotives; prepare minefields around Irkutsk or in the Transbaikal area. Twice every week inform us exactly how many locomotives and how much rolling stock have been removed, and how much remains. Otherwise we do not and shall not believe anything. We have no currency notes now, but we shall have plenty as from the second half of April, but our help is conditional on your practical success in removing rolling stock and locomotives from Vladivostok, in preparing to blow up bridges and so forth.

Lenin

April 7

Published in 1934 in the collection: V. I. Lenin, *From the Epoch of the Civil War*

Published according to the manuscript

SPEECH ON THE FINANCIAL QUESTION AT THE SESSION OF THE ALL-RUSSIA C.E.C. APRIL 18, 1918

One thing is clear at the present time: we shall not solve the financial problem in the immediate future, and shall not restore the financial machinery to its usual channels. That is clear to all. It must be said, however, that so far unfortunately none of us are doing anything in this department to find even the landmarks by which it will be possible to bring the financial apparatus on to the proper course. Comrade Gukovsky has proposed a plan to us. I shall not dwell upon whether this plan is good or bad. One thing only is clear to me: at the present time it is impossible to fulfil even the best plan in the financial sphere because as a matter of fact the machinery has not been organised for fulfilling it. If we were to try to carry out any kind of taxation, we would immediately come up against the fact that at present individual regions impose taxation according as someone takes it into his head to do so, as he has occasion to do so, and as local conditions allow him. In this respect the Soviets, which have power locally are not connected with one another at the present time. On the one hand, they are therefore divorced from the central authority and, on the other hand, they are insufficiently organised to be able actually to carry out what we draw up here. Let us take an example. I have personally had occasion to see Soviets which not only could not put into effect this financial plan that we are outlining, but which even in their own localities very often do not possess the power that they should have. Very often, owing to the policy which we see in operation just now, these Soviets do not make use of

their power, are unable to use it, because power is actually in the hands of certain groups which are often hostile to the Soviets, do not obey the Soviets and which, unfortunately, have a definite armed force at their disposal. In order not to speak abstractly, I shall cite an example. Not far from Moscow, in Ryazan Gubernia, I observed the following. There is a Soviet. Alongside it there is a Revolutionary Military Committee. The latter regards itself as autonomous in relation to the Soviet and itself imposes taxes, without even rendering any account to the Soviet. The Soviet itself also imposes taxes. As you see, if under such circumstances we try to carry out a plan from here, of course, it will not work and, of course, nothing will come of it, because even there, locally the Revolutionary Military Committee does not obey the Soviet and consequently, too, the Soviet cannot do anything for the central government. Hence something has to he done. It is necessary to set up a different organisation so that all the decrees published do not remain merely decrees, and so that they can be put into effect and not left hanging in the air.

Brief newspaper report
published on April 19, 1918
in *Izvestia VTsIK*, No. 77

First published in full
in 1920 in the book *Minutes*
of the Sessions of the All-Russia C.E.C.,
4th Convocation. Verbatim Report,
Moscow

Published according to
the text of the book

SPEECH IN THE MOSCOW SOVIET OF WORKERS', PEASANTS' AND RED ARMY DEPUTIES APRIL 23, 1918

VERBATIM REPORT

Comrades, allow me first of all to greet the newly elected Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies.

You have had to elect a new membership at an extremely grave time, at a tragic moment when the development of our revolution is entering its most dangerous and difficult phase. Elements hostile to the revolution, all those who support the enemies of the people, all those who follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie, had put great hopes in the elections to our Soviet, for at the present time we are passing through an extremely difficult period, when the victorious advance of the revolution has ended and it has entered a phase of painful experiences and even defeats. And at this moment the proletariat has again shown us the great strength of its class-consciousness. The workers, appreciating the full difficulty of the period we are passing through, clearly understand that the removal of the great afflictions which have now fallen to the lot of the working people depends not on us, but on the whole course of historical events. With heroic determination the workers will shoulder the burden of new deprivations, if they can defend thereby the gains of the October Revolution.

There is no doubt that, along with severe trials, the revolution has nevertheless entered a phase of new, inconspicuous victories, which do not catch the eye but are not less important than the brilliant victories of the epoch of the October barricades. We are confronted in all their

magnitude by our two mortal enemies; facing us in full armour are the external and the internal enemies, ready to tear the revolution to pieces and awaiting a suitable moment to deliver a knock-out blow. The external enemy is international imperialism. Armed to the teeth and possessing a wealth of technical equipment, it is awaiting the moment for a new predatory attack on Soviet Russia. Bearing this in mind, we must with merciless clear-sightedness look the ominous truth squarely in the face.

At the present time, as a result of the most reactionary war which our tormented country has had to endure, we do not have sufficient forces for an active, armed struggle against world reaction; we do not have an army, we do not have the forces with which to oppose the excellently organised contingents of international counter-revolution, which have the strength that comes with up-to-date equipment and ideal discipline. For the time being we are alone and surrounded by deadly enemies.

At the time of the October uprising of the working people, when we unfurled the Red banner of the socialist revolution before the workers, we went through a period of easy, dazzling success. The workers of other countries, who heard the far-off roar of the Russian revolution, understood what was taking place in Russia and realised that the Russian proletariat's action furthered their own vital cause. At that time, we easily coped with the reactionary gangs, we easily suppressed the remnants of the Menshevik gangs who were in revolt against the people and who opposed us not by open struggle arms in hand but by the dirty weapon of lies, slander and unprecedented treachery. As a result of our struggle against the counter-revolution we achieved a big victory, as seen from the fact that the counter-revolutionary Kornilov, foremost in audacity, was killed by his own soldiers, who had revolted against him.[98]

Waging an extensive struggle against the domestic counter-revolution on all fronts, we took advantage of the hitch suffered by the international bourgeoisie and delivered a well-timed, powerful body-blow at the now shattered counter-revolution. We can say with confidence that in the main the civil war is at an end. There will be some skirmishes, of course, and in some towns street fighting will

flare up here or there, due to isolated attempts by the reactionaries to overthrow the strength of the revolution—the Soviet system—but there is no doubt that on the internal front reaction has been irretrievably smashed by the efforts of the insurgent people. Thus we have survived the first period of development of the revolution—the beginning of which dates from the October days—a period of intoxicating success, which did, in fact, go to the heads of some people.

I repeat again that the most difficult, the gravest phase in the life of our revolution has now begun. The task before us is the inflexible exertion of all our strength and its application to new creative work, for only iron endurance and labour discipline will enable the revolutionary Russian proletariat, as yet so solitary in its gigantic revolutionary work, to hold out till the time of deliverance when the international proletariat will come to our aid.

We are a revolutionary working-class contingent that has advanced to the forefront, not because we are better than other workers, not because the Russian proletariat is superior to the working class of other countries, but solely because we were one of the most backward countries in the world. We shall achieve final victory only when we succeed at last in conclusively smashing international imperialism, which relies on the tremendous strength of its equipment and discipline. But we shall achieve victory only together with all the workers of other countries, of the whole world.

By force of circumstances, we have had to make an onerous peace in Brest, and we do not hide the fact that at any moment this peace may be treacherously violated by the numerous enemies of the revolution who are advancing upon us from all sides, and against whom we are powerless to begin an active struggle at the present moment. Bear in mind that anyone who would call you just now to this active, armed, open struggle against international predatory imperialism would commit an act of treachery to the people, would be a voluntary or involuntary agent provocateur and servitor of one or other clique of the imperialists. And anyone who acts in opposition to the tactics to which we have adhered in the recent period—even if he calls himself the most "Left", even super-Left, Communist—is a bad

revolutionary, I will say more, is not a revolutionary at all. (*Applause*.)

Our backwardness has put us in the forefront, and we shall perish unless we are capable of holding out until we receive powerful support from workers who have risen in revolt in other countries. Our task consists in steadily continuing our tactics of proletarian struggle.

We have one extremely dangerous secret enemy, more dangerous than many open counter-revolutionaries; this enemy is the deadly enemy of the socialist revolution and Soviet power, which is a people's parliament of a new type for the poor, one that has hitherto not existed anywhere—this enemy is the anarchy of the petty proprietor. There is no doubt that we have come near to surmounting the most difficult obstacles in the way of the development of the socialist revolution. The first and foremost task confronting us is the full realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat in all spheres: in the organisation of labour discipline, in production, and in the distribution of products. The enemy of whom I have spoken is the anarchy of the petty proprietors, whose life is guided by one thought: "I grab all I can—the rest can go hang." This enemy is more powerful than all the Kornilovs, Dutovs and Kaledins put together.

These petty kulaks, petty employers and proprietors say: "All the time we have been oppressed, all the time we have been crushed—well, how can we fail to take advantage of such a favourable opportunity." This phenomenon is a serious obstacle and unless we overcome it victory is inconceivable, for a new Kornilov will grow from each petty proprietor, from each greedy grabber.

Alongside this danger, the terrible spectre of approaching famine and mass unemployment confronts us, but we see that all class-conscious workers, whose numbers increase not daily but hourly, take into consideration and understand that at the present time the sole means of struggle against these grave dangers is the unrelaxing exertion of all our strength and powerful endurance. And let it be remembered by those who give way to despair, and who lose heart and vigour at difficult moments in our revolution, that we have always said that we cannot pass from capital-

ism to the full victory of socialism by the bloodless and easy path of persuasion and conciliation, and that we can only reach our goal as the result of a furious struggle.

The dictatorship of the proletariat stands for the use of force against the exploiters. Our road is through endurance, proletarian solidarity, and the iron dictatorship of the working people. There is no doubt that in many cases the Soviet government has not displayed sufficient determination in the struggle against counter-revolution, and in this respect it has had the appearance not of iron, but of jelly, from which socialism cannot be built. We have not conquered petty-bourgeois anarchy. This country, which the course of history has advanced to the foremost position in the arena of the world revolution, a country devastated and bled white, is in an extremely grave situation and we shall be crushed if we do not counter ruin, disorganisation and despair with the iron dictatorship of the class-conscious workers. We shall be merciless both to our enemies and to all waverers and harmful elements in our midst who dare to bring disorganisation into our difficult creative work of building a new life for the working people.

We have begun to solve a problem the mastery of which will bring the full guarantee and consolidation of socialism. To overcome all difficulties, to struggle successfully against famine and unemployment, we shall perform an imperceptible, modest but difficult task of state importance, and anyone who opposes us will be a bitter enemy of the world proletariat.

The elections to the Moscow Soviet have shown how great is the workers' insight into current events. They have realised that Soviet power is not a showy ornament but something of their own flesh and blood. This last act, that of the elections to our Soviet, has spelt defeat for all those who pinned their hopes on these elections, for all the wavering elements, and this gives me hope and confidence that we are on the right road, which will lead us to the full victory of socialism. (*Ovation.*)

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Published according to
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collated with the verbatim report
and the *Izvestia* text

THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT[99]

Written in March-April 1918
Published on April 28, 1918
in *Pravda* No. 83
and *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 85
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to
the text of the pamphlet:
N. Lenin, *The Immediate*
Tasks of the Soviet Government
2nd ed., Moscow, 1918,
collated with the manuscript

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THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF THE RUSSIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC AND THE FUNDAMENTAL TASKS OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

Thanks to the peace which has been achieved—despite its extremely onerous character and extreme instability—he Russian Soviet Republic has gained an opportunity to concentrate its efforts for a while on the most important and most difficult aspect of the socialist revolution, namely, the task of organisation.

This task was clearly and definitely set before all the working and oppressed people in the fourth paragraph (Part 4) of the resolution adopted at the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets in Moscow on March 15, 1918, in that paragraph (or part) which speaks of the self-discipline of the working people and of the ruthless struggle against chaos and disorganisation.*

Of course, the peace achieved by the Russian Soviet Republic is unstable not because she is now thinking of resuming military operations; apart from bourgeois counter-revolutionaries and their henchmen (the Mensheviks and others), no sane politician thinks of doing that. The instability of the peace is due to the fact that in the imperialist states bordering on Russia to the West and the East, which command enormous military forces, the military party, tempted by Russia's momentary weakness and egged on by capitalists, who hate socialism and are eager for plunder, may gain the upper hand at any moment.

Under these circumstances the only real, not paper, guarantee of peace we have is the antagonism among the imperialist powers, which has reached extreme limits, and

* See this volume, p. 200.—*Ed.*

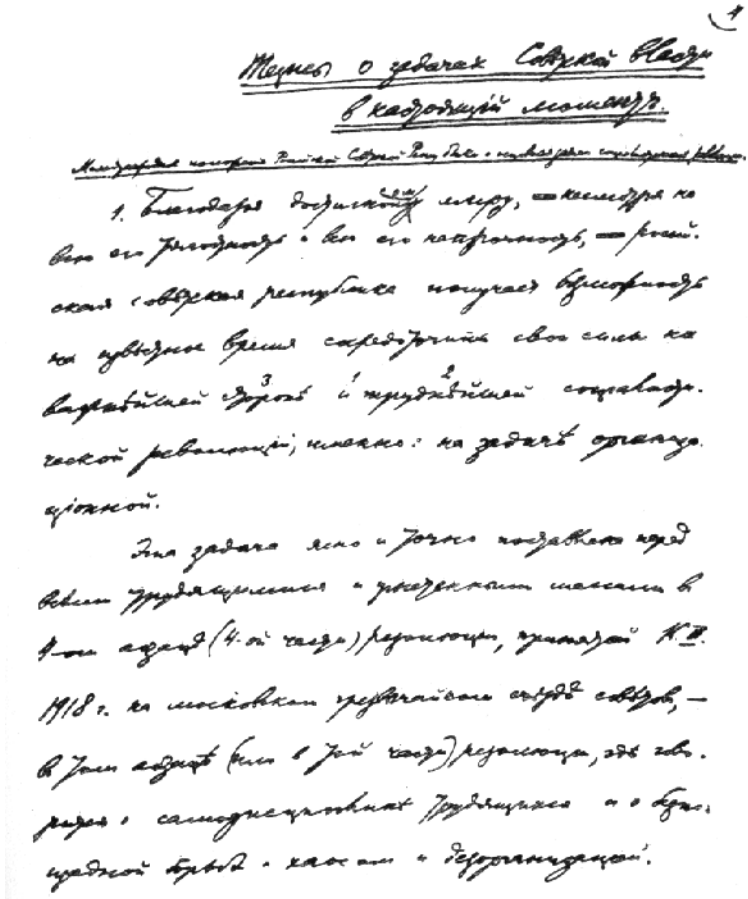
which is apparent on the one hand in the resumption of the imperialist butchery of the peoples in the West, and on the other hand in the extreme intensification of imperialist rivalry between Japan and America for supremacy in the Pacific and on the Pacific coast.

It goes without saying that with such an unreliable guard for protection, our Soviet Socialist Republic is in an extremely unstable and certainly critical international position. All our efforts must be exerted to the very utmost to make use of the respite given us by the combination of circumstances so that we can heal the very severe wounds inflicted by the war upon the entire social organism of Russia and bring about an economic revival, without which a real increase in our country's defence potential is inconceivable.

It also goes without saying that we shall be able to render effective assistance to the socialist revolution in the West which has been delayed for a number of reasons, only to the extent that we are able to fulfil the task of organisation confronting us.

A fundamental condition for the successful accomplishment of the primary task of organisation confronting us is that the people's political leaders, i.e., the members of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and following them all the class-conscious representatives of the mass of the working people, shall fully appreciate the radical distinction in this respect between previous bourgeois revolutions and the present socialist revolution.

In bourgeois revolutions, the principal task of the mass of working people was to fulfil the negative or destructive work of abolishing feudalism, monarchy and medievalism. The positive or constructive work of organising the new society was carried out by the property-owning bourgeois minority of the population. And the latter carried out this task with relative ease, despite the resistance of the workers and the poor peasants, not only because the resistance of the people exploited by capital was then extremely weak, since they were scattered and uneducated, but also because the chief organising force of anarchically built capitalist society is the spontaneously growing and expanding national and international market.



Тезисы о задачах Советской власти в настоящий момент.

1. Главная бедствия войны, — империя на Востоке и империя на Западе, — российская социалистическая республика пережила временно в настоящее время сосредоточила свои силы на наиболее злостной и упорной социалистической революции, именно: на задаче организационной.

Эта задача ясна и точно указана всей новой трудящимися и эксплуатируемыми массами в 4-м издании (4-й части) резолюции, принятой V-м 1918 г. на московской городской конференции, — в этом издании (или в 4-й части) резолюции, где говорится о самодисциплине трудящихся и о борьбе против буржуазии, хаоса и дезорганизации.

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Theses on the Tasks of the Soviet Government in the Present Situation", March-April 1918

Reduced

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Theses
on the Tasks of the Soviet Government
in the Present Situation", March-April 1918
Reduced

In every socialist revolution, however—and consequently in the socialist revolution in Russia which we began on October 25, 1917—the principal task of the proletariat, and of the poor peasants which it leads, is the positive or constructive work of setting up an extremely intricate and delicate system of new organisational relationships extending to the planned production and distribution of the goods required for the existence of tens of millions of people. Such a revolution can be successfully carried out only if the majority of the population, and primarily the majority of the working people, engage in independent creative work as makers of history. Only if the proletariat and the poor peasants display sufficient class-consciousness, devotion to principle, self-sacrifice and perseverance, will the victory of the socialist revolution be assured. By creating a new, Soviet type of state, which gives the working and oppressed people the chance to take an active part in the independent building up of a new society, we solved only a small part of this difficult problem . The principal difficulty lies in the economic sphere, namely, the introduction of the strictest and universal accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods, raising the productivity of labour and *socialising* production *in practice.*

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The development of the Bolshevik Party, which today is the governing party in Russia, very strikingly indicates the nature of the turning-point in history we have now reached, which is the peculiar feature of the present political situation, and which calls for a new orientation of Soviet power, i.e., for a new presentation of new tasks.

The first task of every party of the future is to convince, the majority of the people that its programme and tactics are correct. This task stood in the forefront both in tsarist times and in the period of the Chernovs' and Tseretelis' policy of compromise with the Kerenskys and Kishkins. This task has now been fulfilled in the main, for, as the recent Congress of Soviets in Moscow incontrovertibly proved, the majority of the workers and peasants of Russia are obviously on the side of the Bolsheviks; but of course,

it is far from being completely fulfilled (and it can never be completely fulfilled).

The second task that confronted our Party was to capture political power and to suppress the resistance of the exploiters. This task has not been completely fulfilled either, and it cannot be ignored because the monarchists and Constitutional-Democrats on the one hand, and their henchmen and hangers-on, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, on the other, are continuing their efforts to unite for the purpose of overthrowing Soviet power. In the main, however, the task of suppressing the resistance of the exploiters was fulfilled in the period from October 25, 1917, to (approximately) February 1918, or to the surrender of Bogayevsky.[100]

A third task is now coming to the fore as the immediate task and one which constitutes the peculiar feature of the present situation, namely, the task of organising *administration* of Russia. Of course, we advanced and tackled this task on the very day following October 25, 1917. Up to now, however, since the resistance of the exploiters still took the form of open civil war, up to now the task of administration *could not* become the *main*, the *central* task.

Now it has become the main and central task. We, the Bolshevik Party, have *convinced* Russia. We have *won* Russia from the rich for the poor, from the exploiters for the working people. Now we must *administer* Russia. And the whole peculiarity of the present situation, the whole difficulty, lies in understanding *the specific features of the transition* from the principal task of convincing the people and of suppressing the exploiters by armed force to the principal task of *administration*.

For the first time in human history a socialist party has managed to complete in the main the conquest of power and the suppression of the exploiters, and has managed to *approach directly* the task of *administration*. We must prove worthy executors of this most difficult (and most gratifying) task of the socialist revolution. We must *fully realise* that in order to administer successfully, *besides* being able to convince people, besides being able to win a civil war, we must be able to do *practical organisational work*. This is the most difficult task, because it is a matter

of organising in a new way the most deep-rooted, the economic, foundations of life of scores of millions of people. And it is the most gratifying task, because only *after* it has been fulfilled (in the principal and main outlines) will it be possible to say that Russia *has become* not only a Soviet, but also a socialist, republic.

THE GENERAL SLOGAN OF THE MOMENT

The objective situation reviewed above, which has been created by the extremely onerous and unstable peace, the terrible state of ruin, the unemployment and famine we inherited from the war and the rule of the bourgeoisie (represented by Kerensky and the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries who supported him), all this has inevitably caused extreme weariness and even exhaustion of wide sections of the working people. These people insistently demand—and cannot but demand—a respite. The task of the day is to restore the productive forces destroyed by the war and by bourgeois rule; to heal the wounds inflicted by the war, by the defeat in the war, by profiteering and the attempts of the bourgeoisie to restore the overthrown rule of the exploiters; to achieve economic revival; to provide reliable protection of elementary order. It may sound paradoxical, but in fact, considering the objective conditions indicated above, it is absolutely certain that at the present moment the Soviet system can secure Russia's transition to socialism only if these very elementary, extremely elementary problems of maintaining public life are practically solved in spite of the resistance of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. In view of the specific features of the present situation, and in view of the existence of Soviet power with its land socialisation law, workers' control law, etc., the practical solution of these extremely elementary problems and the overcoming of the organisational difficulties of the first stages of progress toward socialism are now two aspects of the same picture.

Keep regular and honest accounts of money, manage economically, do not be lazy, do not steal, observe the strictest labour discipline—it is these slogans, justly scorned

by the revolutionary proletariat when the bourgeoisie used them to conceal its rule as an exploiting class, that are now, since the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, becoming the immediate and the principal slogans of the moment. On the one hand, the practical application of these slogans by *the mass* of working people is the *sole* condition for the salvation of a country which has been tortured almost to death by the imperialist war and by the imperialist robbers (headed by Kerensky); on the other hand, the practical application of these slogans by the *Soviet* State, by *its* methods, on the basis of *its* laws, is a necessary and *sufficient* condition for the final victory of socialism. This is precisely what those who contemptuously brush aside the idea of putting such "hackneyed" and "trivial" slogans in the forefront fail to understand. In a small-peasant country, which overthrew tsarism only a year ago, and which liberated itself from the Kerenskys less than six months ago, there has naturally remained not a little of spontaneous anarchy, intensified by the brutality and savagery that accompany every protracted and reactionary war, and there has arisen a good deal of despair and aimless bitterness. And if we add to this the provocative policy of the lackeys of the bourgeoisie (the Mensheviks, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc.) it will become perfectly clear what prolonged and persistent efforts must be exerted by the best and the most class-conscious workers and peasants in order to bring about a complete change in the mood of the people and to bring them on to the proper path of steady and disciplined labour. Only such a transition brought about by the mass of the poor (the proletarians and semi-proletarians) can consummate the victory over the bourgeoisie and particularly over the peasant bourgeoisie, more stubborn and numerous.

THE NEW PHASE OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOURGEOISIE

The bourgeoisie in our country has been conquered, but it has not yet been uprooted, not yet destroyed, and not even utterly broken. That is why we are faced with a new and higher form of struggle against the bourgeoisie, the transition from the very simple task of further expropriating the

capitalists to the much more complicated and difficult task of creating conditions in which it will be impossible for the bourgeoisie to exist, or for a new bourgeoisie to arise. Clearly, this task is immeasurably more significant than the previous one; and until it is fulfilled there will be no socialism.

If we measure our revolution by the scale of West-European revolutions we shall find that at the present moment we are approximately at the level reached in 1793 and 1871. We can be legitimately proud of having risen to this level, and of having certainly, in one respect, advanced somewhat further, namely: we have decreed and introduced throughout Russia the highest *type* of state—Soviet power. Under no circumstances, however, can we rest content with what we have achieved, because we have only just started the transition to socialism, we have *not yet* done the decisive thing in *this* respect.

The decisive thing is the organisation of the strictest and country-wide accounting and control of production and distribution of goods. And yet, we have *not yet* introduced accounting and control in those enterprises and in those branches and fields of economy which we have taken away from the bourgeoisie; and without this there can be no thought of achieving the second and equally essential material condition for introducing socialism, namely, raising the productivity of labour on a national scale.

That is why the present task could not be defined by the simple formula: continue the offensive against capital. Although we have certainly not finished off capital and although it is certainly necessary to continue the offensive against this enemy of the working people, such a formula would be inexact, would not be concrete, would not take into account the *peculiarity* of the present situation in which, in order to go on advancing successfully *in the future*, we must "suspend" our offensive *now*.

This can be explained by comparing our position in the war against capital with the position of a victorious army that has captured, say, a half or two-thirds of the enemy's territory and is compelled to halt in order to muster its forces, to replenish its supplies of munitions, repair and reinforce the lines of communication, build new storehouses,

bring up new reserves, etc. To suspend the offensive of a victorious army under such conditions is necessary precisely in order to gain the rest of the enemy's territory, i.e., in order to achieve complete victory. Those who have failed to understand that the objective state of affairs at the present moment dictates to us precisely such a "suspension" of the offensive against capital have failed to understand anything at all about the present political situation.

It goes without saying that we can speak about the "suspension" of the offensive against capital only in quotation marks, i.e., only metaphorically. In ordinary war, a general order can be issued to stop the offensive, the advance can actually be stopped. In the war against capital, however, the advance cannot be stopped, and there can be no thought of our abandoning the further expropriation of capital. What we are discussing is the shifting of the *centre of gravity* of our economic and political work. Up to now measures for the direct expropriation of the expropriators were *in the forefront*. Now the organisation of accounting and control in those enterprises in which the capitalists have already been expropriated, and in all other enterprises, advances *to the forefront*.

If we decided to continue to expropriate capital at the same rate at which we have been doing it up to now, we should certainly suffer defeat, because our work of organising proletarian accounting and control has obviously—obviously to every thinking person—*fallen behind* the work of *directly* "expropriating the expropriators". If we now concentrate all our efforts on the organisation of accounting and control, we shall be able to solve this problem, we shall be able to make up for lost time, we shall *completely* win our "campaign" against capital.

But is not the admission that we must make up for lost time tantamount to admission of some kind of an error? Not in the least. Take another military example. If it is possible to defeat and push back the enemy merely with detachments of light cavalry, it should be done. But if this can be done successfully only up to a certain point, then it is quite conceivable that when this point has been reached, it will be necessary to bring up heavy artillery. By admitting that it is now necessary to make up for lost time in

bringing up heavy artillery, we do not admit that the successful cavalry attack was a mistake.

Frequently, the lackeys of the bourgeoisie reproached us for having launched a "Red Guard" attack on capital. The reproach is absurd and is worthy only of the lackeys of the money-bags, because *at one time* the "Red Guard" attack on capital was absolutely dictated by circumstances. Firstly, *at that time* capital put up military resistance through the medium of Kerensky and Krasnov, Savinkov and Gotz (Gegechkori is putting up such resistance even now), Dutov and Bogayevsky. Military resistance cannot be broken except by military means, and the Red Guards fought in the noble and supreme historical cause of liberating the working and exploited people from the yoke of the exploiters.

Secondly, we could not at that time put methods of administration in the forefront in place of methods of suppression, because the art of administration is not innate, but is acquired by experience. At that time we lacked this experience; now we have it. Thirdly, at that time we could not have specialists in the various fields of knowledge and technology at our disposal because those specialists were either fighting in the ranks of the Bogayevskys, or were still able to put up systematic and stubborn passive resistance by way of *sabotage*. Now we have broken the sabotage. The "Red Guard" attack on capital was successful, was victorious, because we broke capital's military resistance and its resistance by sabotage.

Does that mean that a "Red Guard" attack on capital is *always* appropriate, under *all* circumstances, that we have no other means of fighting capital? It would be childish to think so. We achieved victory with the aid of light cavalry, but we also have heavy artillery. We achieved victory by methods of suppression; we shall be able to achieve victory also by methods of administration. We must know how to change our methods of fighting the enemy to suit changes in the situation. We shall not for a moment renounce "Red Guard" suppression of the Savinkovs and Gegechkoris and all other landowner and bourgeois counter-revolutionaries. We shall not be so foolish, however, as to put "Red Guard" methods in the forefront at a time

when the period in which Red Guard attacks were necessary has, in the main, drawn to a close (and to a victorious close), and when the period of utilising bourgeois specialists by the proletarian state power for the purpose of reploughing the soil in order to prevent the growth of any bourgeoisie whatever is knocking at the door.

This is a peculiar epoch, or rather stage of development, and in order to defeat capital completely, we must be able to adapt the forms of our struggle to the peculiar conditions of this stage.

Without the guidance of experts in the various fields of knowledge, technology and experience, the transition to socialism will be impossible, because socialism calls for a conscious mass advance to greater productivity of labour compared with capitalism, and on the basis achieved by capitalism. Socialism must achieve this advance *in its own way*, by its own methods—or, to put it more concretely, by *Soviet* methods. And the specialists, because of the whole social environment which made them specialists, are, in the main, inevitably bourgeois. Had our proletariat, after capturing power, quickly solved the problem of accounting, control and organisation on a national scale (which was impossible owing to the war and Russia's backwardness), then we, after breaking the sabotage, would also have completely subordinated these bourgeois experts to ourselves by means of universal accounting and control. Owing to the considerable "delay" in introducing accounting and control generally, we, although we have managed to conquer sabotage, have *not yet* created the conditions which would place the bourgeois specialists at our disposal. The mass of saboteurs are "going to work", but the best organisers and the top experts can be utilised by the state either in the old way, in the bourgeois way (i.e., for high salaries), or in the new way, in the proletarian way (i.e., creating the conditions of national accounting and control from below, which would inevitably and of itself subordinate the experts and enlist them for our work).

Now we have to resort to the old bourgeois method and to agree to pay a very high price for the "services" of the top bourgeois experts. All those who are familiar with the subject appreciate this, but not all ponder over the sig-

nificance of this measure being adopted by the proletarian state. Clearly, this measure is a compromise, a departure from the principles of the Paris Commune and of every proletarian power, which call for the reduction of all salaries to the level of the wages of the average worker, which urge that careerism be fought not merely in words, but in deeds.

Moreover, it is clear that this measure not only implies the cessation—in a certain field and to a certain degree—of the offensive against capital (for capital is not a sum of money, but a definite social relation); it is also *a step backward* on the part of our socialist Soviet state power, which from the very outset proclaimed and pursued the policy of reducing high salaries to the level of the wages of the average worker.[101]

Of course, the lackeys of the bourgeoisie, particularly the small fry, such as the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn* people and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, will giggle over our confession that we are taking a step backward. But we need not mind their giggling. We must study the specific features of the extremely difficult and new path to socialism without concealing our mistakes and weaknesses, and try to be prompt in doing what has been left undone. To conceal from the people the fact that the enlistment of bourgeois experts by means of extremely high salaries is a retreat from the principles of the Paris Commune would be sinking to the level of bourgeois politicians and deceiving the people. Frankly explaining how and why we took this step backward, and then publicly discussing what means are available for making up for lost time, means educating the people and learning from experience, learning together with the people how to build socialism. There is hardly a single victorious military campaign in history in which the victor did not commit certain mistakes, suffer partial reverses, temporarily yield something and in some places retreat. The "campaign" which we have undertaken against capitalism is a million times more difficult than the most difficult military campaign, and it would be silly and disgraceful to give way to despondency because of a particular and partial retreat.

We shall now discuss the question from the practical point of view. Let us assume that the Russian Soviet

Republic requires one thousand first-class scientists and experts in various fields of knowledge, technology and practical experience to direct the labour of the people towards securing the speediest possible economic revival. Let us assume also that we shall have to pay these "stars of the first magnitude"—of course the majority of those who shout loudest about the corruption of the workers are themselves utterly corrupted by bourgeois morals—25,000 rubles per annum each. Let us assume that this sum (25,000,000 rubles) will have to be doubled (assuming that we have to pay bonuses for particularly successful and rapid fulfilment of the most important organisational and technical tasks), or even quadrupled (assuming that we have to enlist several hundred foreign specialists, who are more demanding). The question is, would the annual expenditure of fifty or a hundred million rubles by the Soviet Republic for the purpose of reorganising the labour of the people on modern scientific and technological lines be excessive or too heavy? Of course not. The overwhelming majority of the class-conscious workers and peasants will approve of this expenditure because they know from practical experience that our backwardness causes us to lose thousands of millions, and that we have *not yet* reached that degree of organisation, accounting and control which would induce all the "stars" of the bourgeois intelligentsia to participate voluntarily in *our* work.

It goes without saying that this question has another side to it. The corrupting influence of high salaries—both upon the Soviet authorities (especially since the revolution occurred so rapidly that it was impossible to prevent a certain number of adventurers and rogues from getting into positions of authority, and they, together with a number of inept or dishonest commissars, would not be averse to becoming "star" embezzlers of state funds) and upon the mass of the workers—is indisputable. Every thinking and honest worker and poor peasant, however, will agree with us, will admit, that we cannot immediately rid ourselves of the evil legacy of capitalism, and that we can liberate the Soviet Republic from the duty of paying an annual "tribute" of fifty million or one hundred million rubles (a tribute for our own-backwardness in organising *country-wide*

accounting and control *from below*) only by organising ourselves, by tightening up discipline in our own ranks, by purging our ranks of all those who are "preserving the legacy of capitalism", who "follow the traditions of capitalism", i.e., of idlers, parasites and embezzlers of state funds (now all the land, all the factories and all the railways are the "state funds" of the Soviet Republic). If the class-conscious advanced workers and poor peasants manage with the aid of the Soviet institutions to organise, become disciplined, pull themselves together, create powerful labour discipline in the course of one year, then in a year's time we shall throw off this "tribute", which can be reduced even before that ... in exact proportion to the successes we achieve in our workers' and peasants' labour discipline and organisation. The sooner we ourselves, workers and peasants, learn the best labour discipline and the most modern technique of labour, using the bourgeois experts to teach us, the sooner we shall liberate ourselves from any "tribute" to these specialists.

Our work of organising country-wide accounting and control of production and distribution under the supervision of the proletariat has lagged very much behind our work of directly expropriating the expropriators. This proposition is of fundamental importance for understanding the specific features of the present situation and the tasks of the Soviet government that follow from it. The centre of gravity of our struggle against the bourgeoisie is shifting to the organisation of such accounting and control. Only with this as our starting-point will it be possible to determine correctly the immediate tasks of economic and financial policy in the sphere of nationalisation of the banks, monopolisation of foreign trade, the state control of money circulation, the introduction of a property and income tax satisfactory from the proletarian point of view, and the introduction of compulsory labour service.

We have been lagging very far behind in introducing socialist reforms in these spheres (very, very important spheres), and this is because accounting and control are insufficiently organised in general. It goes without saying that this is one of the most difficult tasks, and in view of the ruin caused by the war, it can be fulfilled only over a

long period of time; but we must not forget that it is precisely here that the bourgeoisie—and particularly the numerous petty and peasant bourgeoisie—are putting up the most serious fight, disrupting the control that is already being organised, disrupting the grain monopoly, for example, and gaining positions for profiteering and speculative trade. We have far from adequately carried out the things we have decreed, and the principal task of the moment is to concentrate all efforts on the businesslike, practical *realisation* of the principles of the reforms which have already become law (but not yet reality).

In order to proceed with the nationalisation of the banks and to go on steadfastly towards transforming the banks into nodal points of public accounting under socialism, we must first of all, and above all, achieve real success in increasing the number of branches of the People's Bank, in attracting deposits, in simplifying the paying in and withdrawal of deposits by the public, in abolishing queues, in catching and *shooting* bribe-takers and rogues, etc. At first we must really carry out the simplest things, properly organise what is available, and then prepare for the more intricate things.

Consolidate and improve the state monopolies (in grain, leather, etc.) which have already been introduced, and by doing so prepare for the state monopoly of foreign trade. Without this monopoly we shall not be able to "free ourselves" from foreign capital by paying "tribute".[102] And the possibility of building up socialism depends entirely upon whether we shall be able, by paying a certain tribute to foreign capital during a certain transitional period, to safeguard our internal economic independence.

We are also lagging very far behind in regard to the collection of taxes generally, and of the property and income tax in particular. The imposing of indemnities upon the bourgeoisie—a measure which in principle is absolutely permissible and deserves proletarian approval—shows that in this respect we are still nearer to the methods of warfare (to win Russia from the rich for the poor) than to the methods of administration. In order to become stronger, however, and in order to be able to stand firmer on our feet, we must adopt the latter methods, we must substitute for the

indemnities imposed upon the bourgeoisie the constant and regular collection of a property and income tax, which will bring a *greater* return to the proletarian state, and which calls for better organisation on our part and better accounting and control.[103]

The fact that we are late in introducing compulsory labour service also shows that the work that is coming to the fore at the present time is precisely the preparatory organisational work that, on the one hand, will finally consolidate our gains and that, on the other, is necessary in order to prepare for the operation of "surrounding" capital and compelling it to "surrender". We ought to begin introducing compulsory labour service immediately, but we must do so very gradually and circumspectly, testing every step by practical experience, and, of course, taking the first step by introducing compulsory labour service *for the rich*. The introduction of work and consumers' budget books for every bourgeois, including every rural bourgeois, would be an important step towards completely "surrounding" the enemy and towards the creation of a truly popular accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR COUNTRY-WIDE ACCOUNTING AND CONTROL

The state, which for centuries has been an organ for oppression and robbery of the people, has left us a legacy of the people's supreme hatred and suspicion of everything that is connected with the state. It is very difficult to overcome this, and only a Soviet government can do it. Even a Soviet government, however, will require plenty of time and enormous perseverance to accomplish it. This "legacy" is especially apparent in the problem of accounting and control—the fundamental problem facing the socialist revolution on the morrow of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. A certain amount of time will inevitably pass before the people, who feel free for the first time now that the landowners and the bourgeoisie have been overthrown, will understand—not from books, but from their own, *Soviet* experience—will understand and feel that without comprehensive state accounting and control of the production and

distribution of goods, the power of the working people, the freedom of the working people, *cannot* be maintained, and that a return to the yoke of capitalism is *inevitable*.

All the habits and traditions of the bourgeoisie, and of the petty bourgeoisie in particular, also oppose *state* control, and uphold the inviolability of "sacred private property", of "sacred" private enterprise. It is now particularly clear to us how correct is the Marxist thesis that anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism are *bourgeois* trends, how irreconcilably opposed they are to socialism, proletarian dictatorship and communism. The fight to instill into the people's minds the idea of *Soviet* state control and accounting, and to carry out this idea in practice; the fight to break with the rotten past, which taught the people to regard the procurement of bread and clothes as a "private" affair, and buying and selling as a transaction "which concerns only myself"—is a great fight of world-historic significance, a fight between socialist consciousness and bourgeois-anarchist spontaneity.

We have introduced workers' control as a law, but this law is only just beginning to operate and is only just beginning to penetrate the minds of broad sections of the proletariat. In our agitation we do not sufficiently explain that lack of accounting and control in the production and distribution of goods means the death of the rudiments of socialism, means the embezzlement of state funds (for all property belongs to the state and the state is the Soviet state in which power belongs to the majority of the working people). We do not sufficiently explain that carelessness in accounting and control is downright aiding and abetting the German and the Russian Kornilovs, who can overthrow the power of the working people *only* if we fail to cope with the task of accounting and control, and who, with the aid of the whole of the rural bourgeoisie, with the aid of the Constitutional-Democrats, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, are "watching" us and waiting for an opportune moment to attack us. And the advanced workers and peasants do not think and speak about this sufficiently. Until workers' control has become a fact, until the advanced workers have organised and carried out a victorious and ruthless crusade against the violators of

this control, or against those who are careless in matters of control, it will be impossible to pass from the first step (from workers' control) to the second step towards socialism, i.e., to pass on to workers' regulation of production.

The socialist state can arise only as a network of producers' and consumers' communes, which conscientiously keep account of their production and consumption, economise on labour, and steadily raise the productivity of labour, thus making it possible to reduce the working day to seven, six and even fewer hours. Nothing will be achieved unless the strictest, country-wide, comprehensive accounting and control of *grain* and the *production of grain* (and later of all other essential goods) are set going. Capitalism left us a legacy of mass organisations which can facilitate our transition to the mass accounting and control of the distribution of goods, namely, the consumers' co-operative societies. In Russia these societies are not so well developed as in the advanced countries, nevertheless, they have over ten million members. The Decree on Consumers' Co-operative Societies,[104] issued the other day, is an extremely significant phenomenon, which strikingly illustrates the peculiar position and the specific tasks of the Soviet Socialist Republic at the present moment.

The decree is an agreement with the bourgeois co-operative societies and the workers' co-operative societies which still adhere to the bourgeois point of view. It is an agreement, or compromise, firstly because the representatives of the above-mentioned institutions not only took part in discussing the decree, but actually had a decisive say in the matter, for the parts of the decree which were strongly opposed by these institutions were dropped. Secondly, the essence of the compromise is that the Soviet government has abandoned the principle of admission of new members to co-operative societies without entrance fees (which is the only consistently proletarian principle); it has also abandoned the idea of uniting the whole population of a given locality in a *single* co-operative society. Contrary to this principle, which is the only socialist principle and which corresponds to the task of abolishing classes, the "working-class co-operative societies" (which in this case call themselves "class" societies only because they subordinate

themselves to the class interests of the bourgeoisie) were given the right to continue to exist. Finally, the Soviet government's proposal to expel the bourgeoisie entirely from the boards of the co-operative societies was also considerably modified, and only owners of private capitalist trading and industrial enterprises were forbidden to serve on the boards.

Had the proletariat, acting through the Soviet government, managed to organise accounting and control on a national scale, or at least laid the foundation for such control, it would not have been necessary to make such compromises. Through the food departments of the Soviets, through the supply organisations under the Soviets we should have organised the population into a single co-operative society under proletarian management. We should have done this without the assistance of the bourgeois co-operative societies, without making any concession to the purely bourgeois principle which prompts the workers' co-operative societies to remain workers' societies *side by side* with bourgeois societies, *instead of* subordinating these bourgeois co-operative societies entirely to themselves, merging the two together and taking the *entire* management of the society and the supervision of the consumption of the rich *in their own* hands.

In concluding such an agreement with the bourgeois co-operative societies, the Soviet government concretely defined its tactical aims and its peculiar methods of action in the present stage of development as follows: by directing the bourgeois elements, utilising them, making certain partial concessions to them, we create the conditions for further progress that will be slower than we at first anticipated, but surer, with the base and lines of communication better secured and with the positions which have been won better consolidated. The Soviets can (*and should*) now gauge their successes in the field of socialist construction, among other things, by extremely clear, simple and practical standards, namely, in how many communities (communes or villages, or blocks of houses, etc.) co-operative societies have been organised, and to what extent their development has reached the point of embracing the whole population .

RAISING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF LABOUR

In every socialist revolution, after the proletariat has solved the problem of capturing power, and to the extent that the task of expropriating the expropriators and suppressing their resistance has been carried out in the main, there necessarily comes to the forefront the fundamental task of creating a social system superior to capitalism, namely, raising the productivity of labour, and in this connection (and for this purpose) securing better organisation of labour. Our Soviet state is precisely in the position where, thanks to the victories over the exploiters—from Kerensky to Kornilov—it is able to approach this task directly, to tackle it in earnest. And here it becomes immediately clear that while it is possible to take over the central government in a few days, while it is possible to suppress the military resistance (and sabotage) of the exploiters even in different parts of a great country in a few weeks, the capital solution of the problem of raising the productivity of labour requires, at all events (particularly after a most terrible and devastating war), several years. The protracted nature of the work is certainly dictated by objective circumstances.

The raising of the productivity of labour first of all requires that the material basis of large-scale industry shall be assured, namely, the development of the production of fuel, iron, the engineering and chemical industries. The Russian Soviet Republic enjoys the favourable position of having at its command, even after the Brest peace, enormous reserves of ore (in the Urals), fuel in Western Siberia (coal), in the Caucasus and the South-East (oil), in Central Russia (peat), enormous timber reserves, water power, raw materials for the chemical industry (Karabugaz), etc. The development of these natural resources by methods of modern technology will provide the basis for the unprecedented progress of the productive forces.

Another condition for raising the productivity of labour is, firstly, the raising of the educational and cultural level of the mass of the population. This is now taking place extremely rapidly, a fact which those who are blinded by bourgeois routine are unable to see; they are unable to

understand what an urge towards enlightenment and initiative is now developing among the "lower ranks" of the people thanks to the Soviet form of organisation. Secondly, a condition for economic revival is the raising of the working people's discipline, their skill, the effectiveness, the intensity of labour and its better organisation.

In this respect the situation is particularly bad and even hopeless if we are to believe those who have allowed themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie or by those who are serving the bourgeoisie for their own ends. These people do not understand that there has not been, nor could there be, a revolution in which the supporters of the old system did not raise a howl about chaos, anarchy, etc. naturally, among the people who have only just thrown off an unprecedentedly savage yoke there is deep and widespread seething and ferment; the working out of new principles of labour discipline by the people is a very protracted process, and this process could not even start until complete victory had been achieved over the landowners and the bourgeoisie.

We, however, without in the least yielding to the despair (it is often false despair) which is spread by the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals (who have despaired of retaining their old privileges), must under no circumstances conceal an obvious evil. On the contrary, we shall expose it and intensify the Soviet methods of combating it, because the victory of socialism is inconceivable without the victory of proletarian conscious discipline over spontaneous petty-bourgeois anarchy, this real guarantee of a possible restoration of Kerenskyism and Kornilovism.

The more class-conscious vanguard of the Russian proletariat has already set itself the task of raising labour discipline. For example, both the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union and the Central Council of Trade Unions have begun to draft the necessary measures and decrees.[105] This work must be supported and pushed ahead with all speed. We must raise the question of piece-work[106] and apply and test it in practice; we must raise the question of applying much of what is scientific and progressive in the Taylor system; we must make wages correspond to the total amount of goods turned out, or to the amount of work done by the railways, the water transport system, etc., etc.

The Russian is a bad worker compared with people in advanced countries. It could not be otherwise under the tsarist regime and in view of the persistence of the hangover from serfdom. The task that the Soviet government must set the people in all its scope is—learn to work. The Taylor system, the last word of capitalism in this respect, like all capitalist progress, is a combination of the refined brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of the greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing mechanical motions during work, the elimination of superfluous and awkward motions, the elaboration of correct methods of work, the introduction of the best system of accounting and control, etc. The Soviet Republic must at all costs adopt all that is valuable in the achievements of science and technology in this field. The possibility of building socialism depends exactly upon our success in combining the Soviet power and the Soviet organisation of administration with the up-to-date achievements of capitalism. We must organise in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adapt it to our own ends. At the same time, in working to raise the productivity of labour, we must take into account the specific features of the transition period from capitalism to socialism, which, on the one hand, require that the foundations be laid of the socialist organisation of competition, and, on the other hand, require the use of compulsion, so that the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat shall not be desecrated by the practice of a lily-livered proletarian government.

THE ORGANISATION OF COMPETITION

Among the absurdities which the bourgeoisie are fond of spreading about socialism is the allegation that socialists deny the importance of competition. In fact, it is only socialism which, by abolishing classes, and, consequently, by abolishing the enslavement of the people, for the first time opens the way for competition on a really mass scale. And it is precisely the Soviet form of organisation, by ensuring transition from the formal democracy of the bourgeois republic to real participation of the mass of working people in *administration*, that for the first time puts

competition on a broad basis. It is much easier to organise this in the political field than in the economic field; but for the success of socialism, it is the economic field that matters.

Take, for example, a means of organising competition such as publicity. The bourgeois republic ensures publicity only formally; in practice, it subordinates the press to capital, entertains the "mob" with sensationalist political trash and conceals what takes place in the workshops, in commercial transactions, contracts, etc., behind a veil of "trade secrets", which protect "the sacred right of property". The Soviet government has abolished trade secrets[107]; it has taken a new path; but we have done hardly anything to utilise publicity for the purpose of encouraging economic competition. While ruthlessly suppressing the thoroughly mendacious and insolently slanderous bourgeois press, we must set to work systematically to create a press that will not entertain and fool the people with political sensation and trivialities, but which will submit the questions of everyday economic life to the people's judgement and assist in the serious study of these questions. Every factory, every village is a producers' and consumers' commune, whose right and duty it is to apply the general Soviet laws in their own way ("in their own way", not in the sense of violating them, but in the sense that they can apply them in various forms) and in their own way to solve the problem of accounting in the production and distribution of goods. Under capitalism, this was the "private affair" of the individual capitalist, landowner or kulak. Under the Soviet system, it is not a private affair, but a most important affair of state.

We have scarcely yet started on the enormous, difficult but rewarding task of organising competition between communes, of introducing accounting and publicity in the process of the production of grain, clothes and other things, of transforming dry, dead, bureaucratic accounts into living examples, some repulsive, others attractive. Under the capitalist mode of production, the significance of individual example, say the example of a co-operative workshop, was inevitably very much restricted, and only those imbued with petty-bourgeois illusions could dream of

"correcting" capitalism through the example of virtuous institutions. After political power has passed to the proletariat, after the expropriators have been expropriated, the situation radically changes and—as prominent socialists have repeatedly pointed out—force of example for the first time is able to influence the people. Model communes must and will serve as educators, teachers, helping to raise the backward communes. The press must serve as an instrument of socialist construction, give publicity to the successes achieved by the model communes in all their details, must study the causes of these successes, the methods of management these communes employ, and, on the other hand, must put on the "black list" those communes which persist in the "traditions of capitalism", i.e., anarchy, laziness, disorder and profiteering. In capitalist society, statistics were entirely a matter for "government servants", or for narrow specialists; we must carry statistics to the people and make them popular so that the working people themselves may gradually learn to understand and see how long and in what way it is necessary to work, how much time and in what way one may rest, so that *the comparison of the business results* of the various communes may become a matter of general interest and study, and that the most outstanding communes may be rewarded immediately (by reducing the working day, raising remuneration, placing a larger amount of cultural or aesthetic facilities or values at their disposal, etc.).

When a new class comes on to the historical scene as the leader and guide of society, a period of violent "rocking", shocks, struggle and storm, on the one hand, and a period of uncertain steps, experiments, wavering, hesitation in regard to the selection of new methods corresponding to new objective circumstances, On the other, are inevitable. The moribund feudal nobility avenged themselves on the bourgeoisie which vanquished them and took their place, not only by conspiracies and attempts at rebellion and restoration, but also by pouring ridicule over the lack of skill, the clumsiness and the mistakes of the "upstarts" and the "insolent" who dared to take over the "sacred helm" of state without the centuries of training which the princes, barons, nobles and dignitaries had had; in exactly the same

way the Kornilovs and Kerenskys, the Gotzes and Martovs, the whole of that fraternity of heroes of bourgeois swindling or bourgeois scepticism, avenge themselves on the working class of Russia for having had the "audacity" to take power.

Of course, not weeks, but long months and years are required for a new social class, especially a class which up to now has been oppressed and crushed by poverty and ignorance, to get used to its new position, look around, organise its work and promote its *own* organisers. It is understandable that the Party which leads the revolutionary proletariat has not been able to acquire the experience and habits of large organisational undertakings embracing millions and tens of millions of citizens; the remoulding of the old, almost exclusively agitators' habits is a very lengthy process. But there is nothing impossible in this, and as soon as the necessity for a change is clearly appreciated, as soon as there is firm determination to effect the change and perseverance in pursuing a great and difficult aim, we shall achieve it. There is an enormous amount of organising talent among the "people", i.e., among the workers and the peasants who do not exploit the labour of others. Capital crushed these talented people in thousands; it killed their talent and threw them on to the scrap-heap. We are not yet able to find them, encourage them, put them on their feet, promote them. But we shall learn to do so if we set about it with all-out revolutionary enthusiasm, without which there can be no victorious revolutions.

No profound and mighty popular movement has ever occurred in history without dirty scum rising to the top, without adventurers and rogues, boasters and ranters attaching themselves to the inexperienced innovators, without absurd muddle and fuss, without individual "leaders" trying to deal with twenty matters at once and not finishing any of them. Let the lap-dogs of bourgeois society, from Belorussov to Martov, squeal and yelp about every extra chip that is sent flying in cutting down the big, old wood. What else are lap-dogs for if not to yelp at the proletarian elephant? Let them yelp. We shall go our way and try as carefully and as patiently as possible to test and discover real organisers, people with sober and practical minds, people who combine loyally to socialism with ability without

fuss (and in spite of muddle and fuss) to get a large number of people working together steadily and concertedly within the framework of Soviet organisation. *Only* such people, after they have been tested a dozen times, by being transferred from the simplest to the more difficult tasks, should be promoted to the responsible posts of leaders of the people's labour, leaders of administration. We have not yet learned to do this, but we shall learn.

"HARMONIOUS ORGANISATION" AND DICTATORSHIP

The resolution adopted by the recent Moscow Congress of Soviets advanced as the primary task of the moment the establishment of a "harmonious organisation", and the tightening of discipline.* Everyone now readily "votes for" and "subscribes to" resolutions of this kind; but usually people do not think over the fact that the application of such resolutions calls for coercion—coercion precisely in the form of dictatorship. And yet it would be extremely stupid and absurdly utopian to assume that the transition from capitalism to socialism is possible without coercion and without dictatorship. Marx's theory very definitely opposed this petty-bourgeois-democratic and anarchist absurdity long ago. And Russia of 1917-18 confirms the correctness of Marx's theory in this respect so strikingly, palpably and imposingly that only those who are hopelessly dull or who have obstinately decided to turn their backs on the truth can be under any misapprehension concerning this. Either the dictatorship of Kornilov (if we take him as the Russian type of bourgeois Cavaignac), or the dictatorship of the proletariat—any other choice is *out of the question* for a country which is developing at an extremely rapid rate with extremely sharp turns and amidst desperate ruin created by one of the most horrible wars in history. Every solution that offers a middle path is either a deception of the people by the bourgeoisie—for the bourgeoisie dare not tell the truth, dare not say that they need Kornilov—or an expression of the dull-wittedness of the petty-bourgeois democrats, of the Chernovs, Tseretelis and Martovs, who

* See this volume, p. 200.—*Ed.*

chatter about the unity of democracy, the dictatorship of democracy, the general democratic front, and similar nonsense. Those whom even the progress of the Russian Revolution of 1917-18 has not taught that a middle course is impossible, must be given up for lost.

On the other hand, it is not difficult to see that during every transition from capitalism to socialism, dictatorship is necessary for two main reasons, or along two main channels. Firstly, capitalism cannot be defeated and eradicated without the ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, who cannot at once be deprived of their wealth, of their advantages of organisation and knowledge, and consequently for a fairly long period will inevitably try to overthrow the hated rule of the poor; secondly, every great revolution, and a socialist revolution in particular, even if there is no external war, is inconceivable without internal war, i.e., civil war, which is even more devastating than external war, and involves thousands and millions of cases of wavering and desertion from one side to another, implies a state of extreme indefiniteness, lack of equilibrium and chaos. And of course, all the elements of disintegration of the old society, which are inevitably very numerous and connected mainly with the petty bourgeoisie (because it is the petty bourgeoisie that every war and every crisis ruins and destroys first), are bound to "reveal themselves" during such a profound revolution. And these elements of disintegration *cannot* "reveal themselves" otherwise than in an increase of crime, hooliganism, corruption, profiteering and outrages of every kind. To put these down requires time and *requires an iron hand.*

There has not been a single great revolution in history in which the people did not instinctively realise this and did not show salutary firmness by shooting thieves on the spot. The misfortune of previous revolutions was that the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people, which sustained them in their state of tension and gave them the strength to suppress ruthlessly the elements of disintegration, did not last long. The social, i.e., the class, reason for this instability of the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people was the weakness of the proletariat, which *alone* is able (if it is sufficiently numerous, class-conscious and disci-

plined) to win over to its side *the majority* of the working and exploited people (the majority of the poor, to speak more simply and popularly) and retain power sufficiently long to suppress completely all the exploiters as well as all the elements of disintegration.

It was this historical experience of all revolutions, it was this world-historic—economic and political—lesson that Marx summed up when he gave his short, sharp, concise and expressive formula: dictatorship of the proletariat. And the fact that the Russian revolution has been correct in its approach to this world-historic task *has been proved* by the victorious progress of the Soviet form of organisation among all the peoples and tongues of Russia. For Soviet power is nothing but an organisational form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the advanced class, which raises to a new democracy and to independent participation in the administration of the state tens upon tens of millions of working and exploited peoples who by their own experience learn to regard the disciplined and class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat as their most reliable leader.

Dictatorship, however, is a big word, and big words should not be thrown about carelessly. Dictatorship is iron rule, government that is revolutionarily bold, swift and ruthless in suppressing both exploiters and hooligans. But our government is excessively mild, very often it resembles jelly more than iron. We must not forget for a moment that the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois element is fighting against the Soviet system in two ways; on the one hand, it is operating from without, by the methods of the Savinkovs, Gotzes, Gegechkoris and Kornilovs, by conspiracies and rebellions, and by their filthy "ideological" reflection, the flood of lies and slander in the Constitutional-Democratic, Right Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik press; on the other hand, this element operates from within and takes advantage of every manifestation of disintegration, of every weakness, in order to bribe, to increase indiscipline, laxity and chaos. The nearer we approach the complete military suppression of the bourgeoisie, the more dangerous does the element of petty-bourgeois anarchy become. And the fight against this element cannot be waged

solely with the aid of propaganda and agitation, solely by organising competition and by selecting organisers. The struggle must also be waged by means of coercion.

As the fundamental task of the government becomes, not military suppression, but administration, the typical manifestation of suppression and compulsion will be, not shooting on the spot, but trial by court. In this respect also the revolutionary people after October 25, 1917 took the right path and demonstrated the viability of the revolution by setting up their own workers' and peasants' courts, even before the decrees dissolving the bourgeois bureaucratic judiciary were passed. But our revolutionary and people's courts are extremely, incredibly weak. One feels that we have not yet done away with the people's attitude towards the courts as towards something official and alien, an attitude inherited from the yoke of the landowners and of the bourgeoisie. It is not yet sufficiently realised that the courts are an organ which enlists precisely the poor, every one of them, in the work of state administration (for the work of the courts is one of the functions of state administration), that the courts are an *organ of the power* of the proletariat and of the poor peasants, that the courts are an instrument *for inculcating discipline*. There is not yet sufficient appreciation of the simple and obvious fact that if the principal misfortunes of Russia at the present time are hunger and unemployment, these misfortunes cannot be overcome by spurts, but only by comprehensive, all-embracing, country-wide organisation and discipline in order to increase the output of bread for the people and bread for industry (fuel), to transport these in good time to the places where they are required, and to distribute them properly; and it is not fully appreciated that, consequently, it is *those* who violate labour discipline at any factory, in any undertaking, in any matter, who are *responsible* for the sufferings caused by the famine and unemployment, that we must know how to find the guilty ones, to bring them to trial and ruthlessly punish them. Where the petty-bourgeois anarchy against which we must now wage a most persistent struggle makes itself felt is in the failure to appreciate the economic and political connection between famine and unemployment, on the one hand, and general

laxity in matters of organisation and discipline, on the other—in the tenacity of the *small-proprietor* outlook, namely, I'll grab all I can for myself; the rest can go hang.

In the rail transport service, which perhaps most strikingly embodies the economic ties of an organism created by large-scale capitalism, the struggle between the element of petty-bourgeois laxity and proletarian organisation is particularly evident. The "administrative" elements provide a host of saboteurs and bribe-takers; the best part of the proletarian elements fight for discipline; but among both elements there are, of course, many waverers and "weak" characters who are unable to withstand the "temptation" of profiteering, bribery, personal gain obtained by spoiling the whole apparatus, upon the proper working of which the victory over famine and unemployment depends.

The struggle that has been developing around the recent decree on the management of the railways, the decree which grants individual executives dictatorial powers (or "unlimited" powers),[108] is characteristic. The conscious (and to a large extent, probably, unconscious) representatives of petty-bourgeois laxity would like to see in this granting of "unlimited" (i.e., dictatorial) powers to individuals a departure from the collegiate principle, from democracy and from the principles of Soviet government. Here and there, among Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, a positively hooligan agitation, i.e., agitation appealing to the base instincts and to the small proprietor's urge to "grab all he can", has been developed against the dictatorship decree. The question has become one of really enormous significance. Firstly, the question of principle, namely, is the appointment of individuals, dictators with unlimited powers, in general compatible with the fundamental principles of Soviet government? Secondly, what relation has this case—this precedent, if you will—to the special tasks of government in the present concrete situation? We must deal very thoroughly with both these questions.

That in the history of revolutionary movements the dictatorship of individuals was very often the expression, the vehicle, the channel of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes has been shown by the irrefutable experience of history. Undoubtedly, the dictatorship of individuals was

compatible with bourgeois democracy. On this point, however, the bourgeois denigrators of the Soviet system, as well as their petty-bourgeois henchmen, always display sleight of hand: on the one hand, they declare the Soviet system to be something absurd, anarchistic and savage, and carefully pass over in silence all our historical examples and theoretical arguments which prove that the Soviets are a higher form of democracy, and what is more, the beginning of a *socialist* form of democracy; on the other hand, they demand of us a higher democracy than bourgeois democracy and say: personal dictatorship is absolutely incompatible with your, Bolshevik (i.e., not bourgeois, *but socialist*), Soviet democracy.

These are exceedingly poor arguments. If we are not anarchists, we must admit that the state, *that is*, *coercion*, is necessary for the transition from capitalism to socialism. The form of coercion is determined by the degree of development of the given revolutionary class, and also by special circumstances, such as, for example, the legacy of a long and reactionary war and the forms of resistance put up by the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. There is, therefore, absolutely *no* contradiction in principle between Soviet (*that is*, socialist) democracy and the exercise of dictatorial powers by individuals. The difference between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois dictatorship is that the former strikes at the exploiting minority in the interests of the exploited majority, and that it is exercised—*also through individuals*—not only by the working and exploited people, but also by organisations which are built in such a way as to rouse these people to history-making activity. (The Soviet organisations are organisations of this kind.)

In regard to the second question, concerning the significance of individual dictatorial powers from the point of view of the specific tasks of the present moment, it must be said that large-scale machine industry—which is precisely the material source, the productive source, the foundation of socialism—calls for absolute and strict *unity of will*, which directs the joint labours of hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of people. The technical, economic and historical necessity of this is obvious, and all those who have thought about socialism have always regarded it as

one of the conditions of socialism. But how can strict unity of will be ensured? By thousands subordinating their will to the will of one.

Given ideal class-consciousness and discipline on the part of those participating in the common work, this subordination would be something like the mild leadership of a conductor of an orchestra. It may assume the sharp forms of a dictatorship if ideal discipline and class-consciousness are lacking. But be that as it may, *unquestioning subordination* to a single will is absolutely necessary for the success of processes organised on the pattern of large-scale machine industry. On the railways it is twice and three times as necessary. In this transition from one political task to another, which *on the surface* is totally dissimilar to the first, lies the whole originality of the present situation. The revolution has only just smashed the oldest, strongest and heaviest of fetters, to which the people submitted under duress. That was yesterday. Today, however, the same revolution demands—precisely in the interests of its development and consolidation, precisely in the interests of socialism—that the people *unquestioningly obey the single will* of the leaders of labour. Of course, such a transition cannot be made at one step. Clearly, it can be achieved only as a result of tremendous jolts, shocks, reversions to old ways, the enormous exertion of effort on the part of the proletarian vanguard, which is leading the people to the new ways. Those who drop into the philistine hysterics of *Novaya Zhizn* or *Vperyod*,[109] *Dyelo Naroda* or *Nash Vek*[110] do not stop to think about this.

Take the psychology of the average, ordinary representative of the toiling and exploited masses, compare it with the objective, material conditions of his life in society. Before the October Revolution he did *not* see a single instance of the propertied, exploiting classes making any real sacrifice for him, giving up anything for his benefit. He did *not* see them giving him the land and liberty that had been repeatedly promised him, giving him peace, sacrificing "Great Power" interests and the interests of Great Power secret treaties, sacrificing capital and profits. He saw this only *after* October 25, 1917, when he took it himself by force, and had to defend by force what he had taken, against the

Kerenskys, Gotzes, Gegechkoris, Dutovs and Kornilovs. Naturally, for a certain time, all his attention, all his thoughts, all his spiritual strength, were concentrated on taking a breath, on unbending his back, on straightening his shoulders, on taking the blessings of life that were there for the taking, and that had always been denied him by the now overthrown exploiters. Of course, a certain amount of time is required to enable the ordinary working man not only to see for himself, not only to become convinced, but also to feel that he cannot simply "take", snatch, grab things, that this leads to increased disruption, to ruin, to the return of the Kornilovs. The corresponding change in the conditions of life (and consequently in the psychology) of the ordinary working men is only just beginning. And our whole task, the task of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which is the class-conscious spokesman for the strivings of the exploited for emancipation, is to appreciate this change, to understand that it is necessary, to stand at the head of the exhausted people who are wearily seeking a way out and lead them along the true path, along the path of labour discipline, along the path of co-ordinating the task of arguing at mass meetings *about* the conditions of work with the task of unquestioningly obeying the will of the Soviet leader, of the dictator, *during* the work.

The "mania for meetings" is an object of the ridicule, and still more often of the spiteful hissing of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn* people, who see only the chaos, the confusion and the outbursts of small-proprietor egoism. But without the discussions at public meetings the mass of the oppressed could never have changed from the discipline forced upon them by the exploiters to conscious, voluntary discipline. The airing of questions at public meetings is the genuine democracy of the working people, their way of unbending their backs, their awakening to a new life, their first steps along the road which they themselves have cleared of vipers (the exploiters, the imperialists, the landowners and capitalists) and which they want to learn to build themselves, in their own way, for themselves, on the principles of their own *Soviet*, and not alien, not aristocratic, not bourgeois rule. It required precisely the October victory of the working people over the exploiters, it required

a whole historical period in which the working people themselves could first of all discuss the new conditions of life and the new tasks, in order to make possible the durable transition to superior forms of labour discipline, to the conscious appreciation of the necessity for the dictatorship of the proletariat, to unquestioning obedience to the orders of individual representatives of the Soviet government during the work.

This transition has now begun.

We have successfully fulfilled the first task of the revolution; we have seen how the mass of working people evolved in themselves the fundamental condition for its success: they united their efforts against the exploiters in order to overthrow them. Stages like that of October 1905, February and October 1917 are of world-historic significance.

We have successfully fulfilled the second task of the revolution: to awaken, to raise those very "lower ranks" of society whom the exploiters had pushed down, and who only after October 25, 1917 obtained complete freedom to overthrow the exploiters and to begin to take stock of things and arrange life in their own way. The airing of questions at public meetings by the most oppressed and downtrodden, by the least educated mass of working people, their coming over to the side of the Bolsheviks, their setting up everywhere of their own Soviet organisations—this was the second great stage of the revolution.

The third stage is now beginning. We must consolidate what we ourselves have won, what we ourselves have decreed, made law, discussed, planned—consolidate all this in stable forms of *everyday labour discipline*. This is the most difficult, but the most gratifying task, because only its fulfilment will give us a socialist system. We must learn to combine the "public meeting" democracy of the working people—turbulent, surging, overflowing its banks like a spring flood—with *iron* discipline while at work, with *unquestioning obedience* to the will of a single person, the Soviet leader, while at work.

We have not yet learned to do this.

We shall learn it.

Yesterday we were menaced by the restoration of bourgeois exploitation, personified by the Kornilovs, Gotzes,

Dutovs, Gegechkoris and Bogayevskys. We conquered them. This restoration, this very same restoration menaces us today in another form, in the form of the element of petty-bourgeois laxity and anarchism, or small-proprietor "it's not my business" psychology, in the form of the daily, petty, but numerous sorties and attacks of this element against proletarian discipline. We must, and we shall, vanquish this element of petty-bourgeois anarchy.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET ORGANISATION

The socialist character of Soviet, i.e., *proletarian*, democracy, as concretely applied today, lies first in the fact that the electors are the working and exploited people; the bourgeoisie is excluded. Secondly, it lies in the fact that all bureaucratic formalities and restrictions of elections are abolished; the people themselves determine the order and time of elections, and are completely free to recall any elected person. Thirdly, it lies in the creation of the best mass organisation of the vanguard of the working people, i.e., the proletariat engaged in large-scale industry, which enables it to lead the vast mass of the exploited, to draw them into independent political life, to educate them politically by their own experience; therefore for the first time a start is made by the *entire* population in learning the art of administration, and in beginning to administer.

These are the principal distinguishing features of the democracy now applied in Russia, which is a higher *type* of democracy, a break with the bourgeois distortion of democracy, transition to socialist democracy and to the conditions in which the state can begin to wither away.

It goes without saying that the element of petty-bourgeois disorganisation (which must *inevitably* be apparent to some extent in *every* proletarian revolution, and which is especially apparent in our revolution, owing to the petty-bourgeois character of our country, its backwardness and the consequences of a reactionary war) cannot but leave its impress upon the Soviets as well.

We must work unremittingly to develop the organisation of the Soviets and of the Soviet government. There is a petty-bourgeois tendency to transform the members of the

Soviets into "parliamentarians", or else into bureaucrats. We must combat this by drawing *all* the members of the Soviets into the practical work of administration. In many places the departments of the Soviets are gradually merging with the Commissariats. Our aim is to draw *the whole of the poor* into the practical work of administration, and all steps that are taken in this direction—the more varied they are, the better—should be carefully recorded, studied, systematised, tested by wider experience and embodied in law. Our aim is to ensure that *every* toiler, having finished his eight hours' "task" in productive labour, shall perform state duties *without pay*; the transition to this is particularly difficult, but this transition alone can guarantee the final consolidation of socialism. Naturally, the novelty and difficulty of the change lead to an abundance of steps being taken, as it were, gropingly, to an abundance of mistakes, vacillation—without this, any marked progress is impossible. The reason why the present position seems peculiar to many of those who would like to be regarded as socialists is that they have been accustomed to contrasting capitalism with socialism abstractly, and that they profoundly put between the two the word "leap" (some of them; recalling fragments of what they have read of Engels's writings, still more profoundly add the phrase "leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom"[111]). The majority of these so-called socialists, who have "read in books" about socialism but who have never seriously thought over the matter, are unable to consider that by "leap" the teachers of socialism meant turning-points on a world-historical scale, and that leaps of this kind extend over decades and even longer periods. Naturally, in such times, the notorious "intelligentsia" provides an infinite number of mourners of the dead. Some mourn over the Constituent Assembly, others mourn over bourgeois discipline, others again mourn over the capitalist system, still others mourn over the cultured landowner, and still others again mourn over imperialist Great Power policy, etc., etc.

The real interest of the epoch of great leaps lies in the fact that the abundance of fragments of the old, which sometimes accumulate more rapidly than the rudiments (not always immediately discernible) of the new, calls for

the ability to discern what is most important in the line or chain of development. History knows moments when the most important thing for the success of the revolution is to heap up as large a quantity of the fragments as possible, i.e., to blow up as many of the old institutions as possible; moments arise when enough has been blown up and the next task is to perform the "prosaic" (for the petty-bourgeois revolutionary, the "boring") task of clearing away the fragments; and moments arise when the careful nursing of the rudiments of the new system, which are growing amidst the wreckage on a soil which as yet has been badly cleared of rubble, is the most important thing.

It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a Communist in general. You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link; the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked together, the way they differ from each other in the historical chain of events, are not as simple and not as meaningless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith.

The fight against the bureaucratic distortion of the Soviet form of organisation is assured by the firmness of the connection between the Soviets and the "people", meaning by that the working and exploited people, and by the flexibility and elasticity of this connection. Even in the most democratic capitalist republics in the world, the poor never regard the bourgeois parliament as "their" institution. But the Soviets are "theirs" and not alien institutions to the mass of workers and peasants. The modern "Social-Democrats" of the Scheidemann or, what is almost the same thing, of the Martov type are repelled by the Soviets, and they are drawn towards the respectable bourgeois parliament, or to the Constituent Assembly, in the same way as Turgenev, sixty years ago, was drawn towards a moderate monarchist and noblemen's Constitution and was repelled by the peasant democracy of Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky.[112]

It is the closeness of the Soviets to the "people", to the working people, that creates the special forms of recall

and other means of control from below which must be most zealously developed now. For example, the Councils of Public Education, as periodical conferences of Soviet electors and their delegates called to discuss and control the activities of the Soviet authorities in this field, deserve full sympathy and support. Nothing could be sillier than to transform the Soviets into something congealed and self-contained. The more resolutely we now have to stand for a ruthlessly firm government, for the dictatorship of individuals *in definite processes of work*, in definite aspects of *purely executive* functions, the more varied must be the forms and methods of control from below in order to counteract every shadow of a possibility of distorting the principles of Soviet government, in order repeatedly and tirelessly to weed out bureaucracy.

CONCLUSION

An extraordinarily difficult, complex and dangerous situation in international affairs; the necessity of manoeuvring and retreating; a period of waiting for new outbreaks of the revolution which is maturing in the West at a painfully slow pace; within the country a period of slow construction and ruthless "tightening up", of prolonged and persistent struggle waged by stern, proletarian discipline against the menacing element of petty-bourgeois laxity and anarchy—these in brief are the distinguishing features of the special stage of the socialist revolution in which we are now living. This is the link in the historical chain of events which we must at present grasp with all our might in order to prove equal to the tasks that confront us before passing to the next link to which we are drawn by a special brightness, the brightness of the victories of the international proletarian revolution.

Try to compare with the ordinary everyday concept "revolutionary" the slogans that follow from the specific conditions of the present stage, namely, manoeuvre, retreat, wait, build slowly, ruthlessly tighten up, rigorously discipline, smash laxity.... Is it surprising that when certain "revolutionaries" hear this they are seized with noble indignation and begin to "thunder" abuse at us for forgetting

the traditions of the October Revolution, for compromising with the bourgeois experts, for compromising with the bourgeoisie, for being petty bourgeois, reformists, and so on and so forth?

The misfortune of these sorry "revolutionaries" is that even those of them who are prompted by the best motives in the world and are absolutely loyal to the cause of socialism fail to understand the particular, and particularly "unpleasant", condition that a backward country, which has been lacerated by a reactionary and disastrous war and which began the socialist revolution long before the more advanced countries, inevitably has to pass through; they lack stamina in the difficult moments of a difficult transition. Naturally, it is the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries" who are acting as an "official" opposition of *this* kind against our Party. Of course, there are and always will be individual exceptions from group and class types. But social types remain. In the land in which the small-proprietor population greatly predominates over the purely proletarian population, the difference between the proletarian revolutionary and petty-bourgeois revolutionary will inevitably make itself felt, and from time to time will make itself felt very sharply. The petty-bourgeois revolutionary wavers and vacillates at every turn of events; he is an ardent revolutionary in March 1917 and praises "coalition" in May, hates the Bolsheviks (or laments over their "adventurism") in July and apprehensively turns away from them at the end of October, supports them in December, and, finally, in March and April 1918 such types, more often than not, turn up their noses contemptuously and say: "I am not one of those who sing hymns to 'organic' work, to practicalness and gradualism."

The social origin of such types is the small proprietor, who has been driven to frenzy by the horrors of war, by sudden ruin, by unprecedented torments of famine and devastation, who hysterically rushes about seeking a way out, seeking salvation, places his confidence in the proletariat and supports it one moment and the next gives way to fits of despair. We must clearly understand and firmly remember the fact that socialism cannot be built on such a social basis. The only class that can lead the working and

exploited people is the class that unswervingly follows its path without losing courage and without giving way to despair even at the most difficult, arduous and dangerous stages. Hysterical impulses are of no use to us. What we need is the steady advance of the iron battalions of the proletariat.

SESSION OF THE ALL-RUSSIA C.E.C.[113]

APRIL 29, 1918

First published in 1920
in the book: *Minutes
of the Sessions
of the All-Russia C.E.C.,
4th Convocation.
Verbatim Report*, Moscow

Published according to
the text of the book,
collated with the verbatim report
and with the text of the pamphlet:
N. Lenin (V. I. Ulyanov),
*Old Articles on Almost New
Subjects*, Moscow, 1922

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1

REPORT ON THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

Comrades, as regards my report, I shall have to present the question today in a somewhat unusual fashion. The point is that the real report is my article on the immediate tasks of the Soviet government,* which was published on Sunday in two newspapers, and with which I presume the majority of those present are acquainted.

Hence I consider that there is no need for me now to repeat here what was said in the report and I can confine myself merely to additions to and explanations of the report. I think that the most suitable form for such explanations now will be that of a polemic, because the question I have touched on in these theses on immediate tasks is nothing but a development of the resolution already adopted by the All-Russia Extraordinary Congress in Moscow on March 15,** a resolution which was not confined to the question of peace then under discussion, but pointed out also the chief task of the present time, the organisational task, the task of self-discipline, the task of combating disorganisation.

It is this that has been the basis, it seems to me, of our political trends, or the chief lines of our political trends, which have become fairly definitely marked in the recent period. I think, therefore, that a polemical form can most clearly confirm what I tried to sketch in a positive form in my article on immediate tasks.

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* See this volume, pp. 235-77.—*Ed.*
** *Ibid.*, pp. 200-01.—*Ed.*

Comrades, if you look at the political trends of contemporary Russia you are above all confronted with the task—here too, as always, so as not to make any mistake in your appraisal—of trying to look at all the trends taken together, for only in this way, only on this condition, can we safeguard ourselves from the errors involved in selecting particular examples. It is clearly possible to find any number of examples to confirm some particular proposition. But that is not the essence of the matter. We can try to get near to elucidating the connection between what is happening to the political trends in the country, taking these trends as a whole, and what is happening to the class interests, which are always manifested in big, serious and powerful political trends, only if we examine these trends as a whole, in their totality.

And so, if we take a look at the big political trends in Russia, it cannot be disputed, I think, that they are clearly and unquestionably divisible into three big groups. In the first group we have the entire bourgeoisie, united wholly and strongly, as one man, in the most determined, one might say reckless, "opposition" to the Soviet government. It is, of course, an opposition in quotation marks, because in fact we have here a furious struggle, which at this moment has drawn to the side of the bourgeoisie all those petty-bourgeois parties which agreed with Kerensky during the revolution. These are the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn* adherents and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, who outdid even the bourgeoisie in the fury of their attacks on us, for it is well known that very often the fury of attacks and the loudness of yelping are inversely proportional to the strength of the political elements from which the furious attacks proceed. (*Applause.*)

The entire bourgeoisie and all its yes-men and servitors, of the Chernov and Tsereteli type, joined in furious attacks against the Soviet system. With an eye to the pleasant prospect which has been realised by their friends, their political fellow-thinkers in the Ukraine, they are all longing to conclude a peace which would allow them, with the help of German bayonets and the bourgeoisie at home, to suppress the influence of the Bolsheviks. This is only too well known. We see a beautiful example of such friends in

the shape of Chkhenkeli in the Caucasus. Everyone will remember this from the newspapers.

It is obvious that the proletariat, having taken power and launched the dictatorship of the working people, the dictatorship of the very poor over the exploiters, could not, of course, meet with anything else.

On the one hand, we have one flank, one front, completely united. If we are sometimes proffered dreams of a united democratic front, I at least, in the rare moments when I have occasion to pick up bourgeois newspapers, in the rare event of having the pleasure of reading such newspapers as *Nash Vek*, *Dyelo Naroda*, etc., even if only glancing at all these newspapers, I always think: what more do you need for unity of the democratic front?

All this unity of the democratic front they have to the full, and we can only rejoice at this unity, for—in so far as fragments of this bourgeois journalism come the way of the masses—it is not unity of a democratic front but unity of attacks on the Bolsheviks. And this unity of the front, from Milyukov to Martov, has deserved that we should put it on a roll of honour on May Day for excellent propaganda in favour of the Bolsheviks.

Comrades, if you take the other, opposite camp, you will see there now only our Party, the Party of Communist Bolsheviks. Events have developed in such a way that our allies during a great part of the post-October period—the Left S.R.s—have at present resigned from formal participation in the government. Their last Congress marked especially vividly the extreme vacillation in this party,[114] and this has now been shown more clearly than ever, since even in the press this party also gives expression to its complete confusion and complete vacillation.

If you decided to draw a graph showing how this party from February 1917—of course, prior to the split of the S.R.s into a Left and a Right wing—if you decided to draw a graph showing month by month on which side this party stood, on the side of the proletariat or on the side of the bourgeoisie, and if you were to continue drawing it for a year, the result would be a graph looking like a medical chart, at the sight of which everyone would say: here is a remarkable case of fever, a remarkably persistent fever!

In point of fact, hardly any other party has undergone such permanent and continual vacillations in the history of the revolution.

And so, if we take all these three main trends and look at them, it will become clear to us that such an alignment is not accidental, that it fully confirms what we Bolsheviks had occasion to point out in 1915, while still abroad, when the first news began to arrive that the revolution in Russia was growing, that it was inevitable—and when we had to answer questions about what the situation of the party would be if events put it in power while the war was still going on. At that time we had to say: it is possible that the revolution will win a decisive victory, this is possible from the class standpoint if at the decisive moments and decisive points the leading elements of the petty bourgeoisie waver to the side of the proletariat*; and that is literally what happened, that is the course the history of the Russian revolution took and is taking at the present moment. Of course, in these vacillations of the petty-bourgeois elements we cannot find the slightest grounds for pessimism, not to speak of despair. It is clear that revolution in a country which has turned against the imperialist war earlier than other countries, revolution in a backward country which, to a considerable extent owing to this backwardness, events have put—of course, for a short time and, of course, in particular questions—in front of other, more advanced countries, this revolution, of course, is inevitably doomed to experience moments of the greatest difficulty and gravity, and most disheartening as well in the near future. For it to hold its front and its allies, for it to manage without waverers at such moments, would be absolutely unnatural; it would mean completely leaving out of account the class character of the revolution, and the nature of the parties and political groupings.

And so, if we look at the sum total of the political trends in Russia from the standpoint of the immediate tasks, from the standpoint of how the real, immediate and prime tasks confront us, the tasks of organisation and discipline, the tasks of accounting and control, we see that there is

* See present edition, Vol. 21, p. 403.—*Ed.*

not the slightest attempt to make a real assessment of this task in the camp which is united in a single democratic front from Milyukov to Martov. There is not and cannot be such an assessment because there is only a single malevolent desire there—and the more vicious it is, the more it does honour to us—to find some possibility, or hint, or dream, of the overthrow of the Soviet regime, and nothing else. Unfortunately, representatives of the party of Left S.R.s have actually expressed most of all—in spite of the very great devotion to the revolution displayed by a large number of members of this party who have always shown much initiative and energy—they have displayed vacillation precisely over the immediate tasks of the present moment in regard to proletarian discipline, accounting, organisation and control, tasks which became natural for socialists when power had been won and the military attacks ranging from the Kerenskys and Krasnovs to the Kornilovs, Gegechkoris and Alexeyevs had been repulsed.

Now, when for the first time we have come to the vital core of the development of the revolution, the question is whether proletarian discipline and organisation will prevail, or whether victory will go to the petty-bourgeois element, which is especially strong in Russia.

For our opponents from the petty-bourgeois camp, the chief arena of struggle against us is the sphere of home policy and economic construction; their weapon is the undermining of everything that the proletariat decrees and endeavours to bring about in the matter of building an organised, socialist economy. Here the petty-bourgeois element—the element of petty proprietors and unbridled selfishness—acts as the determined enemy of the proletariat.

And in the graph shown by the petty bourgeoisie throughout the events of the revolution we see their most marked withdrawal from us. Naturally we find here in this camp the chief opposition to the immediate and current tasks of the moment, opposition in the more exact sense of the word; here we have the opposition of people who do not reject agreement with us in principle, who support us on more essential questions than those on which they criticise, an opposition that is combined with support.

We shall not be surprised if in the pages of the Left S.R. press we come across such statements as those I found in *Znamya Truda*[115] of April 25. It writes: "The Right-wing Bolsheviks are ratifiers" (a horribly contemptuous nickname). What would happen if the opposite nickname was given to the warriors? Would it produce a less horrible impression? Well, if one encounters such trends in Bolshevism, it is an indication of something. It was on April 25 that I happened to look at the theses in a newspaper that gave a political characterisation of us. When I read this thesis I thought this must be someone from *Kommunist*, the newspaper of the "Left Communists" or from their magazine—there is so much that is similar here; but I was destined to disillusionment, because it turned out to be a thesis of Isuv's, published in the newspaper *Vperyod*.[116] (*Laughter, applause.*)

And so, comrades, when we observe such political phenomena as the solidarity of *Znamya Truda* with a particular trend of Bolshevism or with some sort of formulation of Menshevik theses of the very party that pursued the policy of an alliance with Kerensky, of the very party in which Tsereteli concluded an agreement with the bourgeoisie, when we meet with attacks exactly coinciding with those emanating from the group of Left Communists and the new magazine—there is something amiss here. There is something here which sheds light on the real significance of these attacks, and it is worth while paying attention to these attacks if only because we have here an opportunity of assessing the chief tasks of the Soviet government in disputes with people with whom it is worth while disputing, because here we have Marxist theory, and we can take into consideration the significance of the events of the revolution and the undoubted desire to seek out the truth. Here the main basis for a real debate is provided by devotion to socialism and the obvious resolve to be on the side of the proletariat, against the bourgeoisie, whatever errors—in the opinion of particular persons, groups or trends—may have been committed in this respect by the proletariat in fighting against the bourgeoisie.

When I say that it is worth while disputing with them, I mean by a worth-while dispute, of course, not a polemic,

but the fact that the question concerns a dispute over the most essential, fundamental problem of the present time. It is no accident that it is along this line that disputes are taking place. Objectively, it is along this line that the cardinal task lies at the present time—the task of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, which is dictated by the existing conditions in Russia and which has to be carried out in every way in the presence of an abundance of the most diverse petty-bourgeois trends, and when there is every need for the proletariat to say to itself that on this point it cannot make any concessions, because the socialist revolution, begun by wresting power from the bourgeoisie and continued by smashing all resistance of the bourgeoisie, places firmly in the forefront the problems of proletarian discipline and organisation of the working people and ability to tackle the work with strictly businesslike methods and knowledge of the interests of large-scale industry. These problems the proletariat must solve in practice, for otherwise it will suffer defeat.—Here is the chief, real difficulty of the socialist revolution.—This is the reason why it is so worth while, so important, in the historical and political sense of the word, to argue with the representatives of the group of Left Communists, in spite of the fact that, taking their position and theory and examining it, we see there, I repeat—and I shall prove it in a moment—absolutely nothing but the same petty-bourgeois waverings. The comrades of the group of Left Communists, whatever they call themselves, strike a blow primarily at their own theses. I assume that their views are known to the great majority of those at this meeting, because we have discussed the essence of them in Bolshevik circles, starting from the beginning of March, while those who have not taken an interest in the major political literature must have got to know and must have discussed these views in connection with the disputes that arose at the last All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

And so, we see in their theses primarily the same thing that we see now in the whole S.R. party, the same thing that we see now both in the Right-wing camp and in the camp of the bourgeoisie from Milyukov to Martov, for whom these present difficulties of the situation for Russia are especially

painful from the point of view of the loss of her position as a Great Power, from the point of view of her conversion from the old nation, an oppressing state, into an oppressed country, from the standpoint of deciding not on paper but in practice whether the hardships of the road to socialism are worth while, whether the hardships of the newly-begun socialist revolution are worth while, whether it is worth while that the country should undergo the most difficult situations as regards its statehood, as regards its national independence.

Here the deepest division of all is between those for whom that state independence is, as it is for all the bourgeoisie, an ideal and a boundary, their holy of holies—a boundary which must not be crossed and an encroachment on which is a denial of socialism—and those who say that in the age of frenzied imperialist slaughter for redivision of the world the socialist revolution cannot proceed without very heavy defeats for many nations which were formerly considered oppressors. And so, however painful it is for mankind, socialists, class-conscious socialists are ready to undergo all such trials.

The Left S.R.s have wavered most of all on this basis, which is most of all unacceptable to them, and it is just on this basis that we see the greatest waverings among the Left Communists.

In their theses, which, as we know, they discussed with us on April 4,[117] and which they published on April 20, they keep returning to the question of peace.

They devote the greatest attention to appraising the question of peace and thereby try to prove that peace is a manifestation of the psychology of the exhausted and declassed masses.

How very comic their arguments are, when they quote their figures: that 12 were against and 28 were for the conclusion of peace.[118] But if one is to collect statistics, and if the vote of a month and a half ago is to be recalled, should one not take more recent figures. If political significance is to be attached to that vote, should one not call to mind the vote of the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets[119] before saying that the healthy South was against peace, while the exhausted, declassed, industrially weakened North

was allegedly for peace. Should one not call to mind the vote of the majority of the group at the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, in which not even one-tenth were against peace. If figures are to be recalled and political significance attached to them, the political voting needs to be taken as a whole, and then you will see at once that the parties which learnt certain slogans by heart, which made a fetish of these slogans, proved to be on the side of the petty bourgeoisie, while the mass of the working and exploited people, the mass of workers, soldiers and peasants, did not reject peace.

And now, when alongside the criticism of this stand for peace the allegation is made that it was insisted upon by the exhausted, declassed masses, while we see clearly that it was the declassed intelligentsia that was against peace, when we are given the appraisal of events that I read in the newspapers—this fact shows us that on the question of the conclusion of peace the majority of our Party was absolutely right, that when we were told that the game was not worth the candle, that all the imperialists had already combined against us and would in any case strangle us, bring us into disgrace, etc.—we nevertheless concluded peace. It not only seemed to them disgraceful, it seems to them of no avail. They told us that we would not gain a respite. And when we replied: it is impossible to know how international relations will develop, but we do know that the imperialist enemies are fighting one another, events confirmed this, and it was acknowledged by the group of Left Communists, our opponents in ideology and principle, who by and large adopt the standpoint of communism.

This phrase alone is a complete recognition of the correctness of our tactics and the fullest condemnation of those waverings on the question of peace which most of all drove away from us a certain wing of our supporters, both the entire wing grouped in the party of Left S.R.s, and the wing which has existed and still exists in our Party, and which one can confidently say will remain there, and which in its vacillations especially clearly reveals the source of these vacillations. Yes, the peace which we have arrived at is in the highest degree unstable; the respite which we have gained may be cut short any day both from the West and from the East—of this there is no doubt. Our interna-

tional situation is so critical that we must exert all our strength to hold out as long as possible, until the Western revolution matures, the Western revolution which is maturing much more slowly than we expected and desired, but is undoubtedly maturing; it is undoubtedly absorbing and accumulating more and more inflammable material.

If we, as a separate contingent of the world proletariat, have been the first to go forward, it is not because this contingent has been more strongly organised than others. No, it is worse, more weakly and less organised than others, but it would be the height of stupidity and pedantry to argue, as many do: well, if things had been begun by the most organised contingent, and if it had been followed by one less well organised, and after that by one with a third-rate organisation, then we should willingly have been supporters of the socialist revolution. But since things did not go according to the book, since it turned out that the leading contingent was not supported by other contingents, our revolution is doomed to perish. We, on the other hand, say: no, our task is to transform the organisation in general; our task, since we are alone, is to maintain the revolution, to preserve for it at least a certain bastion of socialism, however weak and moderately sized, until the revolution matures in other countries, until other contingents come up to us. But to expect history to set the socialist contingents of the various countries in motion in strict sequence and according to a plan, means to have no notion of revolution or, out of stupidity, to renounce support of the socialist revolution.

At a time when we have found out for ourselves and proved that we have a firm position in Russia but do not have forces to oppose international imperialism, we have only one task, our tactics become those of manoeuvring, waiting and retreat. I am very well aware that these words cannot claim to be popular and that if they are given an appropriate turn and put in association with the word "coalition", then the way is wide open here for piquant comparisons and for all kinds of reproaches and scoffing. But however much our adversaries—the bourgeoisie—on the Right and Our friends of yesterday on the Left, the Left S.R.s, and our friends—friends, I am sure, of yesterday, today and

tomorrow—the Left Communists, however much they aim the shafts of their wit at this, and whatever proofs they give of their petty-bourgeois vacillations, they cannot refute these facts. Events have confirmed us, we have gained a respite solely because the imperialist slaughter in the West continues, and in the Far East imperialist rivalry flares up ever more extensively—only this explains the existence of the Soviet Republic, for the time being hanging by the weakest of threads, to which we are holding tight in this political situation. Of course, no piece of paper, no peace treaty, will protect us, nor the circumstance that we do not want to fight against Japan; it is true that she is plundering us, without being deterred by any treaties or formalities. We shall be protected, of course, not by a paper treaty or "state of peace", but by the continuing struggle between the two "giants" of imperialism in the West, and by our endurance. We have not forgotten the basic Marxist lesson which has been so clearly confirmed by the Russian revolution: that it is necessary to reckon forces in tens of millions; anything less is not taken into account in politics; politics discard anything less as a magnitude of no importance. If we look at the international revolution from this aspect, the matter is as clear as it could possibly be: a backward country can easily begin because its adversary has become rotten, because its bourgeoisie is not organised, but for it to continue demands of that country a hundred thousand times more circumspection, caution and endurance. It will be different in Western Europe; there it will be immeasurably more difficult to begin but immeasurably easier to go on. It could not be otherwise, because the degree of organisation and solidarity of the proletariat there is incomparably greater. So long as we are alone, we must say to ourselves, taking all the forces into account: we have just one chance until the outbreak of the European revolution, which will solve all our difficulties—the continuation of the struggle of the international imperialist giants; we have estimated this chance correctly, we have held on to it for several weeks, but it may be shattered tomorrow. Hence the conclusion is: to continue in our foreign policy what we began in March, which can be formulated in the words: to manoeuvre, to retreat, to wait. When

the words "an active foreign policy" turn up in this Left-wing *Kommunist*, when the expression defence of the socialist fatherland is put in quotation marks, which are bound to be ironical, then I say to myself: these people have understood absolutely nothing of the position of the Western proletariat. While they call themselves Left Communists, they are going over to the standpoint of the wavering petty bourgeoisie, which regards the revolution as a means for ensuring its own specific system. International relations indicate as plainly as could be: any Russian who contemplated the task of overthrowing international imperialism on the basis of Russian forces would be a lunatic. While over there in the West the revolution is maturing, although it is now maturing more rapidly than yesterday, our task is only this: we, being the contingent that has come to the forefront despite our weakness, must do everything, take advantage of every chance, so as to hold out in the positions we have won. All other considerations must be subordinated to this, to taking full advantage of our chance, so that we can put off for a few weeks the moment when international imperialism will unite against us. If we act in that way we shall advance along a road that will be approved by every class-conscious worker in the European countries, for he knows what we have learnt since 1905, whereas France and Britain have been learning it for centuries—he knows how slowly revolution grows in the free society of the united bourgeoisie, he knows that against such forces it will be necessary to set in operation an agitational bureau which will conduct propaganda in the true sense of the word when we stand side by side with the German, French and British proletariat which have risen in revolt. Until then, however distressing it may be, however repugnant to revolutionary traditions, the only tactics are: to wait, manoeuvre and retreat.

When people say that we have no foreign, international policy, I say: every other policy consciously or unconsciously slips into playing a provocatory role and makes Russia a tool of alliance with imperialists of the type of Chkhenkeli or Semyonov.

And we say: it is better to endure and be patient, to suffer infinitely greater national and state humiliations

and hardships, but to remain at our post as a socialist contingent that has been cut off by the force of events from the ranks of the socialist army and compelled to wait until the socialist revolution in other countries comes to its aid. And it is coming to our aid. It comes slowly but it is coming. The war that is now going on in the West is revolutionising the masses more than before and is bringing near the hour of an uprising.

The propaganda conducted up to now has said that the imperialist war is a most criminal and most reactionary war for the sake of annexations. But it is now being confirmed that on the Western front, where there are hundreds of thousands and millions of French and German soldiers engaged in slaughter, the revolution cannot fail to mature more rapidly than hitherto, although this revolution is coming more slowly than we expected.

I have dwelt on the question of foreign policy more than I intended, but it seems to me that we see here very clearly that in this question we are, strictly speaking, faced with two main lines—the proletarian line, which says that the socialist revolution is what is dearest and highest for us, and that we must take account of whether it will soon break out in the West, and the other line—the bourgeois line—which says that for it the character of the state as a Great Power and national independence are dearer and higher than anything else.

In regard to domestic issues, we see the same thing on the part of the group of Left Communists, who repeat the main arguments levelled against us from the bourgeois camp. For example, the main argument of the group of Left Communists against us is that there can be observed a Right-Bolshevik deviation, which threatens the revolution by directing it along the path of state capitalism.

Evolution in the direction of state capitalism, there you have the evil, the enemy, which we are invited to combat.

When I read these references to such enemies in the newspaper of the Left Communists, I ask: what has happened to these people that fragments of book-learning can make them forget reality? Reality tells us that state capitalism would be a step forward. If in a small space of time we could achieve state capitalism in Russia, that would be a victory.

How is it that they cannot see that it is the petty proprietor, small capital, that is our enemy? How can they regard state capitalism as the chief enemy? They ought not to forget that in the transition from capitalism to socialism our chief enemy is the petty bourgeoisie, its habits and customs, its economic position. The petty proprietor fears state capitalism above all, because he has only one desire—to grab, to get as much as possible for himself, to ruin and smash the big landowners, the big exploiters. In this the petty proprietor eagerly supports us.

Here he is more revolutionary than the workers, because he is more embittered and more indignant, and therefore he readily marches forward to smash the bourgeoisie—but not as a socialist does in order, after breaking the resistance of the bourgeoisie, to begin building a socialist economy based on the principles of firm labour discipline, within the framework of a strict organisation, and observing correct methods of control and accounting—but in order, by grabbing as much as possible for himself, to exploit the fruits of victory for himself and for his own ends, without the least concern for general state interests and the interests of the class of working people as a whole.

What is state capitalism under Soviet power? To achieve state capitalism at the present time means putting into effect the accounting and control that the capitalist classes carried out. We see a sample of state capitalism in Germany. We know that Germany has proved superior to us. But if you reflect even slightly on what it would mean if the foundations of such state capitalism were established in Russia, Soviet Russia, everyone who is not out of his senses and has not stuffed his head with fragments of book-learning, would have to say that state capitalism would be our salvation.

I said that state capitalism would be our salvation; if we had it in Russia, the transition to full socialism would he easy, would be within our grasp, because state capitalism is something centralised, calculated, controlled and socialised, and that is exactly what we lack: we are threatened by the element of petty-bourgeois slovenliness, which more than anything else has been developed by the whole history of Russia and her economy, and which prevents us

from taking the very step on which the success of socialism depends. Allow me to remind you that I had occasion to write my statement about state capitalism some time before the revolution and it is a howling absurdity to try to frighten us with state capitalism. I remind you that in my pamphlet *The Impending Catastrophe** I then wrote.... (*He reads the passage.*)

I wrote this about the revolutionary-democratic state, the state of Kerensky, Chernov, Tsereteli, Kishkin and their confreres, about a state which had a bourgeois basis and which did not and could not depart from it. I wrote at that time that state capitalism is a step towards socialism; I wrote that in September 1917, and now, in April 1918, after the proletariat's taking power in October, when it has proved its capacity: many factories have been confiscated, enterprises and banks nationalised, the armed resistance of the bourgeoisie and saboteurs smashed—now, when they try to frighten us with capitalism, it is so ludicrous, such a sheer absurdity and fabrication, that it becomes surprising and one asks oneself: how could people have this idea? They have forgotten the mere trifle that in Russia we have a petty-bourgeois mass which sympathises with the abolition of the big bourgeoisie in all countries, but does not sympathise with accounting, socialisation and control—herein lies the danger for the revolution, here you have the unity of social forces which ruined the great French revolution and could not fail to do so, and which, if the Russian proletariat proves weak, can alone ruin the Russian revolution. The petty bourgeoisie, as we see, steeps the whole social atmosphere with petty-proprietor tendencies, with aspirations which are bluntly expressed in the statement: I took from the rich, what others do is not my affair.

Here is our main danger. If the petty bourgeois were subordinated to other class elements, subordinated to state capitalism, the class-conscious worker would be bound to greet that with open arms, for state capitalism under Kerensky's democracy would have been a step towards socialism, and under the Soviet government it would be three-quarters

* See present edition, Vol. 25, pp. 323-69.—*Ed.*

of socialism, because anyone who is the organiser of state-capitalist enterprises can be made one's helper. The Left Communists, however, adopt a different attitude, one of disdain, and when we had our first meeting with the Left Communists on April 4, which incidentally proved that this question from remote history, which had been long discussed, was already a thing of the past, I said that it was necessary, if we properly understood our tasks, to learn socialism from the organisers of the trusts.

These words made the Left Communists horribly indignant, and one of them—Comrade Osinsky—devoted his whole article to inveighing against them. That is substantially what his arguments amounted to.—The fact is, we do not want to teach them, but to learn from them.—We, "Right-wing" Bolsheviks, we want to learn from the organisers of the trusts, but these "Left Communists" want to teach them. But what do you want to teach them? Socialism, perhaps? Teach socialism to merchants, to businessmen? (*Applause.*) No, take on the job yourselves, if you like. We are not going to help you, it is labour in vain. It is no use our teaching these engineers, businessmen and merchants. It is no use teaching them socialism. If we had a bourgeois revolution, then there would be nothing to learn from them—except perhaps that you should grab what you can and have done with it, there is nothing more to learn. But that is not a socialist revolution—that is something that happened in France in 1793, that occurs where there is no socialism but only an approach to socialism.

The landowners have to be overthrown, the bourgeoisie has to be overthrown, and all the actions of the Bolsheviks, all their struggle, their violence against the landowners and capitalists, expropriation and forcible suppression of the resistance of the landowners and capitalists, will be justified and proved a million times correct by history. Taken as a whole, this was a very great historical task, but it was only the first step. What matters now is the purpose for which we crushed them. Was it in order to say that now, having finally crushed them, we shall bow down before their capitalism? No, we shall now learn from them because we lack knowledge, because we do not have this knowledge. We know about socialism, but knowledge of organisation on a

scale of millions, knowledge of the organisation and distribution of goods, etc.—this we do not have. The old Bolshevik leaders did not teach us this. The Bolshevik Party cannot boast of this in its history. We have not done a course on this yet. And we say, let him be a thorough-paced rascal even, but if he has organised a trust, if he is a merchant who has dealt with the organisation of production and distribution for millions and tens of millions, if he has acquired experience—we must learn from him. If we do not learn this from them, we shall not get socialism, the revolution will remain at the stage it has now reached. Only the development of state capitalism, only the painstaking establishment of accounting and control, only the strictest organisation and labour discipline, will lead us to socialism. Without this there is no socialism. (*Applause.*)

It is no use our undertaking the ridiculous task of teaching the organisers of trusts—there is nothing to teach them. We have to expropriate them. That is not where the hitch lies. There is no difficulty whatsoever in that. (*Applause.*) That we have sufficiently demonstrated and proved.

I told every workers' delegation with which I had to deal when they came to me and complained that their factory was at a standstill: you would like your factory to be confiscated. Very well, we have blank forms for a decree ready, they can be signed in a minute. (*Applause.*) But tell us: have you learnt how to take over production and have you calculated what you will produce? Do you know the connection between what you are producing and the Russian and international market? Whereupon it turns out that they have not learnt this yet; there has not been anything about it yet in Bolshevik pamphlets, and nothing is said about it in Menshevik pamphlets either.

The situation is best among those workers who are carrying out this state capitalism: among the tanners and in the textile and sugar industries, because they have a sober, proletarian knowledge of their industry and they want to preserve it and make it more powerful—because in that lies the greatest socialism.[120] They say: I can't cope with this task just yet; I shall put in capitalists, giving them one-third of the posts, and I shall learn from them. And

when I read the ironical statement of the Left Communists: it is yet to be seen who is taking advantage of whom, I find their short-sightedness strange. Of course, if, after taking power in October and after a victorious campaign against the whole bourgeoisie from October to April, we could still be doubtful as to who is taking advantage of whom—whether the workers of the trust organisers, or the businessmen and rascals of the workers—if that were the case, we should have to pack up our belongings and go home, leaving the field to the Milyukovs and Martovs. But that is not the case. The class-conscious worker will not believe it, and the fright of the petty bourgeoisie is laughable; they know that socialism begins where larger-scale industry begins, that the merchants and businessmen have learnt this by their own experience.

We have said: only these material conditions, the material conditions of large-scale machine industry serving tens of millions of people, only these are the basis of socialism, and to learn to deal with this in a petty-bourgeois, peasant country is difficult, but possible. Revolution comes at the price of civil war, but that is something that is the more serious the more the country is civilised and developed. In Germany, state capitalism prevails, and therefore the revolution in Germany will be a hundred times more devastating and ruinous than in a petty-bourgeois country—there, too, there will be gigantic difficulties and tremendous chaos and imbalance. Therefore I do not see the slightest shadow of a reason for despair or despondency in the fact that the Russian revolution accomplished the easier task to start with—that of overthrowing the landowners and bourgeoisie—and is faced now by the more difficult socialist task of organising nation-wide accounting and control.- It is facing the task with which real socialism begins, a task which has the backing of the majority of the workers and class-conscious working people. Yes, the majority of the workers, who are better organised and have gone through the school of the trade unions, are wholeheartedly with us.

This majority raised the questions of piece-work and Taylorism—questions which the gentlemen from *Vperyod* are scoffingly trying to reject—in the trade union councils

before we did, even before the coming of Soviet power with its Soviets; they got busy and set about working out standards of labour discipline. These people showed that for all their proletarian modesty they were well acquainted with the conditions of factory labour, they grasped the essence of socialism better than those who spouted revolutionary phrases but in reality consciously or unconsciously descended to the level of the petty bourgeoisie, whose standpoint was: throw out the rich but it's not worth while putting oneself under the accounting and control of an organisation; that's not needed for small proprietors, they don't want that—but in that alone lies the guarantee of the stability and triumph of our revolution.

Comrades, I shall not touch on further details and quotations from the newspaper *Levi Kommunist*,[121] but I shall say briefly: it is time to cry out when people have gone so far as to say that the introduction of labour discipline will be a step back. And I must say that I regard this as such an unheard-of reactionary thing, such a threat to the revolution, that if I did not know that it was said by a group without any influence, and that it would be refuted at any class-conscious meeting of workers, I would say: the Russian revolution is lost.

The Left Communists write: "The introduction of labour discipline, coupled with restoring the leadership of capitalists in industry, cannot substantially raise labour productivity but it will lower the class initiative, activity and organised character of the proletariat. It threatens serfdom for the working class...." This is untrue; if it were the case, our Russian revolution as regards its socialist tasks and its socialist essence would be on the point of collapse. But this is not true. The declassed petty-bourgeois intelligentsia does not understand that the chief difficulty for socialism lies in ensuring labour discipline. Socialists wrote about this long ago, they thought most of all about this in the distant past, they devoted the greatest concern to it and its analysis, they understood that the real difficulties for the socialist revolution begin here. More than once up to now there have been revolutions which ruthlessly overthrew the bourgeoisie, no less vigorously than we did, but when we went so far as to establish Soviet power

we thereby showed that we were making the practical transition from the abolition of economic serfdom to the self-discipline of labour, that our rule is one which must really be the rule of labour. When people say to us that the dictatorship of the proletariat is recognised in words but that in reality it is mere phrases that are written, this actually shows that they have no notion of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for it by no means merely consists in overthrowing the bourgeoisie or the landowners—that happened in all revolutions—our dictatorship of the proletariat is the establishment of order, discipline, labour productivity, accounting and control by the proletarian Soviet power, which is more stable and firmly based than the previous one. That is what you won't solve, that is what we have not yet taught, that is what is needed by the workers, that is why it is good to show them a mirror in which all these shortcomings are plainly visible. I consider that this is a useful task for it will cause all thinking, class-conscious workers and peasants to devote their main efforts to it. Yes, by overthrowing the landowners and bourgeoisie we cleared the way but we did not build the edifice of socialism. On the ground cleared of one bourgeois generation, new generations continually appear in history, as long as the ground gives rise to them, and it does give rise to any number of bourgeois. As for those who look at the victory over the capitalists in the way that the petty proprietors look at it—"they grabbed, let me have a go too"—indeed, everyone of them is the source of a new generation of bourgeois. When they tell us that the introduction of labour discipline coupled with restoring capitalists as leaders is a threat to the revolution, I say: it is just the socialist character of our revolution that these people have failed to understand, they repeat the very thing that easily unites them with the petty bourgeois, who fear discipline, organisation, accounting and control as the devil fears holy water.

They may say: you are actually proposing here to give us capitalists as leaders among the working-class leaders. Yes, they are being brought in because in the matter of practical organisation they have knowledge that we do not possess. The class-conscious worker will never be afraid of such a leader, because he knows that Soviet power is his

power, that it will stand firm in his defence, because he knows that he wants to learn the practice of organisation.

We organised thousands under the tsar and hundreds of thousands under Kerensky. That is nothing, it does not count in politics. It was preparatory work, it was a preparatory course. Until the leading workers have learnt to organise tens of millions, they will not be socialists or creators of a socialist society, they will not acquire the necessary knowledge of organisation. The road of organisation is a long road and the tasks of socialist construction demand stubborn, long-continued work and appropriate knowledge, of which we do not have enough. Even the more developed generation of the immediate future will hardly achieve the complete transition to socialism.

Recall what former socialists wrote about the future socialist revolution; it is doubtful whether it would be possible to pass to socialism without learning from the organisers of trusts, for they have been concerned with this type of production on a large scale. We do not need to teach them socialism, we need to expropriate them and to break their sabotage. These two tasks we have carried out. We have to make them submit to workers' control. And if our critics among the Left Communists have levelled against us the reproach that we are not leading to communism by our tactics but are going back, their reproaches are ridiculous: they forget that we have lagged behind with accounting and control because it has been very difficult to smash this resistance and bring the bourgeoisie and its technicians and bourgeois specialists into our service. But we need their knowledge, their experience and labour, without which it is impossible, in fact, to gain possession of the culture that was created by the old social relations and has remained as the material basis of socialism. If the Left Communists have not noticed this, it is because they do not see life as it really is but concoct their slogans by counterposing state capitalism to ideal socialism. We, however, must tell the workers: yes, it is a step back, but we have to help ourselves to find a remedy. There is only one remedy: organise to the last man, organise accounting over production, organise accounting and control over consumption and act so that we do not have to turn out hundreds of mil-

lions in currency from the printing press,[122] and so that not a single hundred-ruble note is lost to the state treasury by falling into the wrong hands. This cannot be done by any outburst of revolutionary fervour, by any knock-out blow to the bourgeoisie. It can be done only by self-discipline, only by organising the labour of the workers and peasants, only by accounting and control. This we do not have yet and for it we have paid tribute by paying the capitalist organisers a higher remuneration than they paid you. This we have not learnt, but must learn, it is the road to socialism, the sole road—that of teaching the workers the practical business of managing gigantic enterprises, of organising big industry and large-scale distribution.

Comrades, I am very well aware how easy it is to talk of accounting, control, discipline and self-discipline when the speaker is someone occupying a definite social position. What a lot of material for witticisms this provides, and for saying: when your Party was not in power it promised the workers rivers flowing with milk and honey, mountains of sugar candy, but when these people are in power there is the usual transformation, they begin to talk of accounting, discipline, self-discipline, control, etc. I am very well aware what promising material this is for publicists of the type of Milyukov and Martov.

I am very well aware what rich material this is for persons whose concern is hack writing or showmanship, and who are inclined to use the flimsiest arguments, which receive scant sympathy from class-conscious workers.

In the newspaper *Levi Kommunist* I came across a review of my book[123] by such an eminent publicist as Bukharin; it was moreover a sympathetic review, but anything of value in it lost all its value for me when I had read through this review to the end. I perceived that Bukharin had not seen what should have been seen, and this happened because he wrote his review in April but quoted what had already become out of date for April, what belonged to a previous day, viz., that it was necessary to smash the old state. This we have already done, it is a task which belongs to a previous day, and we have to go forward and look not at the past but at the future and create a state based on the commune; he wrote about what is already embodied in Soviet

organisations, but said nothing about accounting, control and discipline. What a frame of mind these people have, and how their psychology coincides with the sentiments of the petty bourgeoisie: let us overthrow the rich, but there is no need for control. That is how they look at it; it holds them captive and it divides the class-conscious proletarian from the petty bourgeoisie and even from the extreme revolutionaries. This is when the proletarian says: let us organise and brace up, or some petty kulak, and there are millions of them, will overthrow us.

Here is the division between the class-conscious proletarian and the petty bourgeois; here the revolution takes leave of the petty bourgeoisie. And how blind are those people who do not say anything about this.

I shall venture to remind you of some more of my quotations; I said that people will be able to do without coercion when they are accustomed to act without it; such a custom of course, may be the result of long training.

When the Left Communists hear this, they clutch their heads and say: how is it that we didn't notice this? Bukharin, why didn't you criticise it? We showed our strength in suppressing the landowners and the bourgeoisie, and now we have to show our strength as regards self-discipline and organisation, because this is known from thousands of years of past experience and the people must be told that only in this lies the strength of our Soviet power, of the workers' dictatorship, of our proletarian authority. The petty bourgeois, however, hide from this truth behind the shield of revolutionary phraseology.

We have to show our strength. Yes, the small employers, petty proprietors, are ready to help us proletarians to overthrow the landowners and capitalists. But after this our paths diverge. They have no love for organisation, discipline, they are hostile to it. And here we have to wage the most determined, ruthless struggle against these proprietors and small employers. Because it is here, in the sphere of organisation, that socialist construction begins for us. And when I express my dissent to those people who claim to be socialists and who promise the workers they shall enjoy as much as they like and whatever they like, I say that communism presupposes a productivity of labour that

we do not have at present. Our productivity is too low, that is a fact. Capitalism leaves us as a heritage, especially in a backward country, a host of customs through which all state property, all public property, is regarded as something that may be maliciously spoilt. This psychology of the petty-bourgeois mass is felt at every step, and the struggle in this sphere is a very difficult one. Only the organised proletariat can endure everything. I wrote: "Until the higher phase of communism arrives, the socialists demand the strictest control by society and by the state."*

I wrote this before the October Revolution and I stand by it now.

Now, having suppressed the bourgeoisie and broken their sabotage, the time has come when we have an opportunity of dealing with this matter. While this was not the case, the heroes of the day and the heroes of the revolution were the Red Guards who performed their great historic deeds. They took up arms without the consent of the propertied classes. They performed this great historic work. They took up arms in order to overthrow the exploiters and make their arms an instrument for defence of the workers, and in order to look after the standards of production and labour and the standard of consumption.

We have not produced this, but it contains the kernel and the basis of socialism. If there are any to whom such work seems boring and uninteresting, they are representatives of petty-bourgeois laziness.

If our revolution halted here, it would go down in history no less than the revolution of 1793. But people will say: that was in the eighteenth century. For the eighteenth century that sufficed, but for the twentieth it is not enough. Accounting and control—that is mainly what is needed for the proper functioning of communist society. So I wrote before the October Revolution.** I repeat, it was impossible to tackle this matter until the Alexeyevs, Kornilovs and Kerenskys were crushed. Now the armed resistance of the bourgeoisie has been crushed. Our task is to put all the sabo-

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* See present edition, Vol. 25, p. 474.—*Ed.*

** *Ibid.*, p. 478.—*Ed.*

teurs to work under our control, under the control of the Soviet power, to set up managerial bodies so that accounting and control will be strictly carried out. The country is being ruined because after the war it has been through it lacks the elementary conditions for normal existence. Our enemies who are attacking us seem terrible only because we have not instituted accounting and control. When I hear hundreds of thousands of complaints about famine, when you see and know that these complaints are justified, that we have grain and cannot transport it, when we encounter the scoffing of the Left Communists and their objections to such measures as our railway decree—they have mentioned it twice—these are trifles.

At the meeting with the Left Communists on April 4, I said: give us your draft of the decree; after all, you are citizens of the Soviet Republic, members of Soviet institutions, you are not critics standing apart from us, outside the gate, like the bourgeois traders and saboteurs who criticise in order to vent their spleen. You, I repeat, are leaders of Soviet organisations; try to give us your draft decree. They cannot give it and will never be able to, because our railway decree is correct, because by introducing dictatorship our decree has the sympathy of the masses and class-conscious working people of the railways, but is opposed by those managers who plunder and accept bribes; because a vacillating attitude to it is shown by all those who waver between the Soviet government and its enemies—whereas the proletariat, which learnt discipline from large-scale production, knows that there cannot be socialism until production is organised on a large scale and until there is even stricter discipline.

This proletariat supports us in the railway movement; it will combat the anarchy of the petty proprietors and will show that the Russian revolution, which is capable of winning brilliant victories, is capable also of overcoming its own lack of organisation. And among the May Day slogans, from the standpoint of immediate tasks, it will appreciate the slogan of the Central Committee which reads: "We conquered capital, we shall conquer also our own lack of organisation". Only then shall we reach the full victory of socialism! (*Loud applause.*)

2

REPLY TO THE DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON THE IMMEDIATE TASKS

First of all I must reply to Comrade Bukharin's speech. In my first speech I remarked that we were nine-tenths in agreement with him, and so I think it is a pity that we should disagree as regards the other tenth. He is one-tenth in the position of having to spend half his speech disassociating and exorcising himself from absolutely everyone who spoke in support of him. And no matter how excellent his intentions and those of his group, the falsity of their position is proved by the fact that he always has to spend time making excuses and disassociating himself on the issue of state capitalism.

Comrade Bukharin is completely wrong; and I shall make this known in the press because this question is extremely important. I have a couple of words to say about the Left Communists' reproaching us on the grounds that a deviation in the direction of state capitalism is to be observed in our policy; now Comrade Bukharin wrongly states that under Soviet power state capitalism is impossible. So he is contradicting himself when he says that there can be no state capitalism under Soviet power—that is an obvious absurdity. The large number of enterprises and factories under the control of the Soviet government and owned by the state, this alone shows the transition from capitalism to socialism, but Comrade Bukharin ignores this. Instead, he recalls that we were against him in the Left Zimmerwald,[124] but that was ages ago and to recall that now, after Soviet power has been in existence for six months, after we have performed all the experiments we

could when we had expropriated, confiscated and nationalised—after all that to recall what we wrote in 1915 is absurd.... Now we cannot help bringing up the problem of state capitalism and socialism, of how to act in the transitional period, in which you have bits of capitalism and socialism existing side by side under Soviet power. Comrade Bukharin refuses to understand this problem; but I think we cannot throw it out all at once, and Comrade Bukharin does not propose throwing it out and does not deny that this state capitalism is something higher than what is left of the small proprietor's mentality, economic conditions and way of life, which are still extremely prevalent. Comrade Bukharin has not refuted that fact, for it cannot be refuted without forgetting the word Marxist.

Ghe's position that the proletariat in Europe is unclean, that in Germany the proletariat is corrupted,[125] is so crudely nationalistic, so obtuse that I don't know what he will say next. The proletariat in Europe is not one bit more unclean than in Russia, but to start a revolution there is more difficult because the people in power are not idiots like Romanov or boasters like Kerensky but serious leaders of capitalism, which was not the case in Russia.

Finally I come to the chief objections that have been showered upon my article and my speech from all sides. Particularly heavy fire was directed at the slogan: "steal back the stolen", a slogan in which, no matter how I look at it, I can find nothing wrong, when history comes on the scene. If we use the words "expropriate the expropriators", why can't we do without Latin words? (*Applause.*)

I think history will fully justify us, and the masses of the working people are coming over to our side even before history; but if the slogan "steal back the stolen" has shown itself unrestrainedly in the activity of the Soviets, and if it turns out that in a practical and fundamental matter like famine and unemployment we are confronted by enormous difficulties, it is appropriate to say that after the words "steal back what was stolen" the proletarian revolution makes a distinction, which runs: "Count up what was stolen and don't let it be filched piecemeal, and if people start filching for themselves directly or indirectly, these infringers of discipline must be shot...."

And when they start yelling and shouting that this is dictatorship, when they start yelling about Napoleon III and Julius Caesar, when they say this is the working class's inability to act seriously, when they accuse Trotsky, it means there is the same muddle-headedness, the same political mood induced by petty-bourgeois anarchy, which has been protesting not against the "steal back the stolen" slogan, but against the slogan of strict accounting and correct distribution. There will be no famine in Russia if we calculate how much grain there is, check up on all stocks, and if any breaking of the regulations is followed by the most severe punishment. That is where the difference lies. And it arises from the situation that obtains when the socialist revolution is seriously supported only by the proletariat while the petty bourgeoisie approaches it with hesitation, a fact we have always been aware of and always taken into account; and in this wavering they are against us. This will not make us hesitate and we shall continue to follow our path in the certainty that half the proletariat will follow us because it knows perfectly well how the factory owners robbed and stole merely so that the poor should have nothing.

It is just a lot of verbal trickery, all this talk about a dictatorship, Napoleon III, Julius Caesar and so forth. People can be fooled with that kind of talk here, but in the provinces, at every factory, in every village they know perfectly well that we are lagging behind in this respect; no one will question this slogan, everyone knows what it means. And there can be no doubt either that we shall direct all our efforts towards organising accounting, control and correct distribution.

Bukharin told us: "I disassociate myself from those who embrace me." But there are so many of them that Bukharin cannot extricate himself. They don't tell us what their proposals are because they have nothing to propose. Do you know what to propose? I have reproached you in the press and in my speeches. Over the matter of the railway decree we had the pleasure of recalling April 4. There is a reference to this in your magazine, and I have said that if you are not quite satisfied with the decree, give us a new decree. But there has not been a word about this in the

first issue, nor in the second issue, the proofs of which have kindly been given to me to look at; and there was not a word about it in Comrade Bukharin's speech either—a complete coincidence. Both Comrade Bukharin and Comrade Martov have got on their hobby horse—the railway decree—and are riding it to death. They talk about the dictatorship of Napoleon III, Julius Caesar and so on, providing material for a hundred issues that no one will read. But this is a little nearer the point. This is about the workers and the railways. Without railways not only will there be no socialism but everyone will starve to death like dogs while there is grain to be had close by. Everyone knows this perfectly well. Why don't you answer? You are closing your eyes. You are throwing dust in the eyes of the workers—the adherents of *Novaya Zhizn* and the Mensheviks deliberately, Comrade Bukharin by mistake. You are concealing the main issue from the workers when you talk of construction. What can be constructed without railways? And when I see some merchant or other, who tells me during a meeting of some kind, or when I am receiving a delegation, that there has been some improvement on such and such a railway, that praise is worth a million times more to me than 20 resolutions by Communists or anyone else, or any speeches.

When the practical people—engineers, merchants and so on—say that if this government copes at least to some extent with the railways, they will admit that it is a government, their opinion matters more than anything else. Because the railways are the key, they are one of the most striking manifestations of the connection between town and country, between industry and agriculture, on which socialism is entirely based. To make this connection good for the sake of planned activity in the interests of the whole population, we need railways.

All these phrases about dictatorship and so on, over which the Martovs and Karelins have found common ground and which have been masticated twice over by the Constitutional-Democratic press—they amount to nothing.

I have given you the example of the workers' organisations that are doing it, and the state capitalism of other enterprises, other branches of industry; the tobacco workers and tanners have more state capitalism than others, and

their affairs are in better order, and their road to socialism is more certain. There is no concealing this fact, and another thing you can't do is to come out with absurd phrases as Ghe does, when he says that with a rifle he can force anyone. That is a complete absurdity and a complete failure to understand what a rifle is for. After that one might think that a rifle is a bad thing, unless it is anarchist Ghe's head that is the bad thing. (*Applause*.) A rifle was a very good thing when the capitalist who was waging war against us had to be shot, when thieves had to be caught at their thievery and shot. But when Comrade Bukharin said there were people who were receiving salaries of 4,000 and they ought to be put up against a wall and shot, he was wrong. We have got to *find* such people. We have not very many posts where people get 4,000. We pick them up here and there. The whole point is that we have no experts, that is why we have got to enlist 1,000 people, first-class experts in their fields, who value their work, who like large-scale industry because they know that it means improvements in technology. When people here say that socialism can be won without learning from the bourgeoisie, I know this is the psychology of an inhabitant of Central Africa. The only socialism we can imagine is one based on all the lessons learned through large-scale capitalist culture. Socialism without postal and telegraph services, without machines is the emptiest of phrases. But it is impossible to sweep aside the bourgeois atmosphere and bourgeois habits all at once; it needs the kind of organisation on which all modern science and technology are based. To say a rifle will do the job is the greatest stupidity. Everything depends on nation-wide organisation—the whole population's paying income tax, the introduction of labour service, everyone's being registered; while a person is not registered, we have to pay him. When Bukharin said he could not see the principle, he was missing the point. Marx envisaged buying up the bourgeoisie as a class. He was writing about Britain, before Britain had imperialism, when a peaceful transition to socialism was possible—it certainly is not a reference to the earlier type of socialism.[126] We are talking not about the bourgeoisie but about recruiting experts. I have given one example. One could cite thousands. It is simply a question of

attracting people who can be attracted either by buying them with high salaries or by ideological organisation, because you can't deny the fact that it is they who are receiving all the high wages. We know from the example I gave—up to now you have been criticising only tacitly, yet the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries know perfectly well that the salaries paid are high. And the Left Communists and *Novaya Zhizn* adherents know it too.

And they don't criticise this. That's their sincere criticism of the Soviet government! When they saw that their engineers were getting 1,500, they kept quiet. Far better to pay these engineers. And no mention of Julius Caesar or dictatorship. This is political education of the masses. But if I say we are going to pay from 1,500 to 2,000 a month, that's a step back. Then out come Julius Caesar and Napoleon III and the Brest-Litovsk peace and everything; but not a word about your experts, about your engineers. And when they say, when Bukharin says, this is no violation of principle, I say that here we have a violation of the principle of the Paris Commune. State capitalism is not money but social relations. If we pay 2,000 in accordance with the railway decree, that is state capitalism. Comrade Bukharin referred to the Zimmerwald resolution of 1915 and he can't free himself of that ill-digested theory. Free yourself, Comrade Bukharin. Now Comrade Bukharin has said that I am attacking the petty-bourgeois element.

I was not attacking the working peasants when I spoke of the petty-bourgeois element. Let us leave the working peasants alone—that's not what I am talking about. But among the peasantry there are working peasants and petty-bourgeois peasants, who live like petty proprietors at the expense of others; the working peasants are exploited by others, but they want to live at their own expense. So Comrade Karelin in thinking that the working peasants are being attacked is wrong. The poor peasants who have nothing to gain from stealing what is stolen are on our side. They will accept our slogans. We know very well and have seen how people in the villages understand the slogan "steal back the stolen". If people go there agitating about dictatorship and spouting phrases about the Brest peace and so forth, these people who are arguing against us will find themselves

isolated and will receive no support. The proletariat, the mass of the peasants, who are ruined and have no hopes as regards individual farming, will be on our side because they know perfectly well that Russia cannot be kept going simply by stealing. We all know that quite well and everyone can see and feel it in his own, everyday affairs.

In this we are keeping up with economic demands and the mood of the masses of the working people. So when the declassed intellectuals among the Left Communists hurl their thunderbolts at us, we must remain confident that no matter how much they curse us, this slogan of the socialist revolution is the only correct slogan, which the masses of the working people must understand and use if we are to consolidate and complete the socialist revolution. You won't wriggle out of that problem at any workers' meeting; you will be pursued with this decree, this problem. We do not claim to be infallible; many of our decrees are bad. Put them right; you have various magazines and groups of writers. Tell us what is wrong with the railway decree. We suggested you should do so at the meeting of April 4, and today it is April 29th. Twenty-five days have passed and a whole group of splendid writers is silent because they have nothing to say.

You know that our railway decree, in spite of all its mistakes, which we are quite ready to correct, got down to the core of what is needed. It pivots on that mass of workers who respond to the strictest discipline, who need to be organised by a single authority which the Soviets can appoint and which the Soviets can replace and from whom they demand unfailing execution of assignments so that large-scale industry will operate like a machine and thousands of people will be directed by a single will, obey the orders of a single Soviet manager. (*Applause.*) And to bring up Napoleon and Julius Caesar on these grounds is either to go mad or to become completely lost in the literature of the privileged classes whose sole purpose in life is to curse the Bolsheviks. The railway decree, comrades, is a step that shows we are on the right road. In my speech I informed you why we had taken that road; in the Council of People's Commissars we did not spend our time discussing Napoleon

the Great and Julius Caesar but we did go over the question a hundred times of how to get the railways in order, and we know the response from the provinces, and we know from any number of talks with the railway organisations that the proletarians are for us, that they seek discipline and expect order. They see that people in Central Russia are starving while there is grain, but that owing to the transport muddle it is hard to deliver it.

But if there are people who are wavering, lost, in a petty-bourgeois mood, who have been frightened by one-man management, who go into hysterics and refuse to support us, why is this? Is it because there is a Right wing, or because people have got hysterics, particularly the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries? In their case the confusion is complete, no one could sort it out. So to avoid a lot of useless argument we say: get down to the main issue and deal with it in specific terms.

When people here talk of conciliation with the bourgeoisie, as Karelin and Martov have done, that is nonsense. I will remind you from Kautsky's authoritative pamphlet how he conceived life the day after the social revolution. I will tell you approximately what he wrote; the trust organisers will not be left without work to do. That was written by a man who realised that to organise tens of millions of people for the production and distribution of goods is some job! We have not learned this and there is nowhere to learn it, but the trust organisers know that without this there will be no socialism. And we need to know it too. So all these phrases about conciliation and agreement with the bourgeoisie are empty chatter. You cannot refute Kautsky's premise that large-scale industry must be learned through experience.

SIX THESES ON THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT[127]

1. The international position of the Soviet Republic is extremely difficult and critical, because the deepest and fundamental interests of international capital and imperialism induce it to strive not only for a military onslaught on Russia, but also for an agreement on the partition of Russia and the strangulation of the Soviet power. Only the intensification of the imperialist slaughter of the peoples in Western Europe and the imperialist rivalry between Japan and America in the Far East paralyse, or restrain, these aspirations, and then only partially, and only for a certain, probably short, time.

Therefore, the tactics of the Soviet Republic must be, on the one hand, to exert every effort to ensure the country's speediest economic recovery, to increase its defence capacity, to build up a powerful socialist army; on the other hand, in international policy, the tactics must be those of manoeuvring, retreat, waiting for the moment when the international proletarian revolution—which is now maturing more quickly than before in a number of advanced countries—fully matures.

2. In the sphere of domestic policy, the task that comes to the forefront at the present time in conformity with the resolution adopted by the All-Russia Congress of Soviets on March 15, 1918, is the task of organisation. It is this task, in connection with the new and higher organisation of production and distribution on the basis of socialised large-scale machine (labour) production, that constitutes the chief content—and chief condition of complete victory

—of the socialist revolution that was begun in Russia on October 25, 1917.

3. From the purely political point of view, the essence of the present situation is that the task of convincing the working people of Russia that the programme of the socialist revolution is correct and the task of winning Russia from the exploiters for the working people have, in main and fundamental outline, been carried out, and the chief problem that comes to the forefront now is—how to administer Russia. The organisation of proper administration, the undeviating fulfilment of the decisions of the Soviet government—this is the urgent task of the Soviets, this is the condition for the complete victory of the Soviet type of state, which it is not enough to proclaim in formal decrees, which it is not enough to establish and introduce in all parts of the country, but which must also be practically organised and tested in the course of the regular, everyday work of administration.

4. In the sphere of the economic building of socialism, the essence of the present situation is that our work of organising the country-wide and all-embracing accounting and control of production and distribution, and of introducing proletarian control of production, lags far behind the direct expropriation of the expropriators—the landowners and capitalists. This is the fundamental fact determining our tasks.

From this it follows, on the one hand, that the struggle against the bourgeoisie is entering a new phase, namely: the centre of gravity is shifting to the organisation of accounting and control. Only in this way is it possible to consolidate all the economic achievements directed against capital, all the measures in nationalising individual branches of the national economy that we have carried out since October; and only in this way is it possible to prepare for the successful consummation of the struggle against the bourgeoisie, i.e., the complete consolidation of socialism.

From this basic fact follows, on the other hand, the explanation as to why the Soviet government was obliged in certain cases to take a step backward, or to agree to compromise with bourgeois tendencies. Such a step backward and departure from the principles of the Paris Commune was,

for example, the introduction of high salaries for a number of bourgeois experts. Such a compromise was the agreement with the bourgeois co-operatives concerning steps and measures for gradually bringing the entire population into the co-operatives. Compromises of this kind will be necessary until the proletarian government has put country-wide control and accounting firmly on its feet; and our task is, while not in the least concealing their unfavourable features from the people, to exert efforts to improve accounting and control as the only means and method of completely eliminating all compromises of this kind. Compromises of this kind are needed at the present time as the sole (because we are late with accounting and control) guarantee of slower, but surer progress. When the accounting and control of production and distribution is fully introduced the need for such compromises will disappear.

5. Particular significance now attaches to measures for raising labour discipline and the productivity of labour. Every effort must be exerted for the steps already undertaken in this direction, especially by the trade unions, to be sustained, consolidated and increased. This includes, for example, the introduction of piece-work, the adoption of much that is scientific and progressive in the Taylor system, the payment of wages commensurate with the general results of the work of a factory, the exploitation of rail and water transport, etc. This also includes the organisation of competition between individual producers' and consumers' communes, selection of organisers, etc.

6. The proletarian dictatorship is absolutely indispensable during the transition from capitalism to socialism, and in our revolution this truth has been fully confirmed in practice. Dictatorship, however, presupposes a revolutionary government that is really firm and ruthless in crushing both exploiters and hooligans, and our government is too mild. Obedience, and unquestioning obedience at that, during work to the one-man decisions of Soviet directors, of the dictators elected or appointed by Soviet institutions, vested with dictatorial powers (as is demanded, for example, by the railway decree), is far, very far from being guaranteed as yet. This is the effect of the influence

of petty-bourgeois anarchy, the anarchy of small-proprietor habits, aspirations and sentiments, which fundamentally contradict proletarian discipline and socialism. The proletariat must concentrate all its class-consciousness on the task of combating this petty-bourgeois anarchy, which is not only directly apparent (in the support given by the bourgeoisie and their hangers-on, the Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., to every kind of resistance to the proletarian government), but also indirectly apparent (in the historical vacillation displayed on the major questions of policy by both the petty-bourgeois Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the trend in our Party called "Left Communist", which descends to the methods of petty-bourgeois revolutionariness and copies the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

Iron discipline and the thorough exercise of proletarian dictatorship against petty-bourgeois vacillation—this is the general and summarising slogan of the moment.

Written between April 30 and May 3, 1918

Published in 1918 in the pamphlet: N. Lenin *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*, All-Russia C.E.C. Publishers

Published according to the text of the second edition of the pamphlet, 1918, collated with the manuscript

BASIC PROPOSITIONS OF ECONOMIC AND ESPECIALLY ON BANKING POLICY

I. Completion of nationalisation of industry and exchange.
II. Nationalisation of banks and gradual transition to socialism.
III. Compulsory organisation of the population in consumer co-operative societies.
{+Commodity exchange}
IV. Accounting and control of production and distribution of goods.
V. Labour discipline.
{+Tax policy}

Centralisation

Measures for transition to compulsory current accounts or to compulsory keeping of money in the banks.

Compulsory organisation of the population in consumer co-operative, societies and measures for transition to this.

Conditions of an agreement with co-operators on gradual transition of their apparatus towards organisation of the whole population in consumer co-operative societies

Compulsory labour service, begun from the top.

The most ruthless measures to combat chaos, disorder and idleness, and the most vigorous and severe measures for raising the discipline and self-discipline of the workers and peasants, are to be regarded as absolutely essential and urgent.

Conversion of state control into a real control for setting up mobile groups of controllers in all spheres of economic life.

Practical conditions concerning the employment of bourgeois intellectuals and saboteurs who express the desire to work with the Soviet government.

Industrial courts for taking account of production, stocks of goods and labour productivity.

(Immediate and categorical.)

1. Completion of nationalisation of industry.
2. Gradual transition to organisation of one and all in consumer co-operatives and commodity exchange.
3. Banking policy.
4. Labour discipline and so forth.
5. Tax policy (finance).

1. Completion of the nationalisation of all factories, railways, means of production and exchange. Categorical and ruthless struggle against the syndicalist and chaotic attitude to nationalised enterprises.[128] Persistent carrying out of centralisation of economic life on a nation-wide scale. Unremitting demand for preliminary plans and estimates, weekly reports and actual increase of labour productivity, Establishment and practical trial of the apparatus for managing the nationalised industries.

Written in April 1918

First published in 1933 in *Lenin Miscellany XXI*

Published according to the manuscript

DRAFT PLAN OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL WORK[129]

The Supreme Economic Council should immediately give its instructions to the Academy of Sciences, which has launched a systematic study and investigation of the natural productive forces* of Russia, to set up a number of expert commissions for the speediest possible compilation of a plan for the reorganisation of industry and the economic progress of Russia.

The plan should include:

the rational *distribution* of industry in Russia from the standpoint of proximity to raw materials and the lowest consumption of labour-power in the transition from the processing of the raw materials to all subsequent stages in the processing of semi-manufactured goods, up to and including the output of the finished product;

the rational merging and concentration of industry in a few big enterprises from the standpoint of the most up-to-date large-scale industry, especially trusts;

enabling the present Russian Soviet Republic (excluding the Ukraine and the regions occupied by the Germans) as far as possible to provide itself *independently* with *all* the chief items of raw materials and organise main branches of industry;

special attention to the electrification of industry and transport and the application of electricity to farming, and the use of lower grades of fuel (peat, low-grade coal)

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* *Publication* of this material must be accelerated to the utmost; a note about this must be sent to the Commissariat for Education, the Printing Workers' Trade Union and the Commissariat for Labour.[130]

for the production of electricity, with the lowest possible expenditure on extraction and transport;

water power and wind motors in general and in their application to farming.

Written in April 1918

First published on March 4, 1924 in *Pravda* No. 52

Published according to the manuscript

TO THE C.C., R.C.P.[131]

I request you to put on the agenda the question of expelling from the Party those members who, being judges in the case (May 2, 1918) against bribe-takers, where bribery was proved and admitted by the defendants, confined themselves to a sentence of six months' imprisonment.

To award bribe-takers such derisively weak and mild sentences, instead of shooting, is *disgraceful* behaviour for a Communist and revolutionary. Such comrades must be *pilloried* by the court of public opinion and *expelled from the Party*, for their place is at the side of Kerensky and Martov and not at the side of revolutionary Communists.

Lenin

May 4, 1918

First published in 1933
in *Lenin Miscellany XXI*

Published according to
the manuscript

"LEFT-WING" CHILDISHNESS AND THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS MENTALITY

Published May 9, 10, and 11, 1918
in *Pravda* Nos. 88, 89, and 90
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to the text of the pamphlet: N. Lenin, *The Chief Task of Our Day*, Pribol Publishers, Moscow, 1918, collated with the *Pravda* text and the text of the pamphlet: N. Lenin (V. I. Ulyanov), *Old Articles on Almost New Subjects*, Moscow, 1922

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The publication by a small group of "Left Communists" of their journal, *Kommunist* (No. 1, April 20, 1918), and of their "theses", strikingly confirms my views expressed in the pamphlet *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government.** There could not be better confirmation, in political literature, of the utter naïveté of the defence of petty-bourgeois sloppiness that is sometimes concealed by "Left" slogans. It is useful and necessary to deal with the arguments of "Left Communists" because they are characteristic of the period we are passing through. They show up with exceptional clarity the negative side of the "core" of this period. They are instructive, because the people we are dealing with are the best of those who have failed to understand the present period, people who by their knowledge and loyalty stand far, far above the *ordinary* representatives of the same mistaken views, namely, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

I

As a political magnitude, or as a group claiming to play a political role, the "Left Communist" group has presented its "Theses on the Present Situation". It is a good Marxist custom to give a coherent and complete exposition of the principles underlying one's views and tactics. And this good Marxist custom has helped to reveal the mistake committed by our "Lefts", because the mere attempt to argue and not to declaim exposes the unsoundness of their argument.

The first thing that strikes one is the abundance of allusions, hints and evasions with regard to the old question

* See this volume, pp. 235-77.—*Ed.*

of whether it was right to conclude the Brest Treaty. The "Lefts" dare not put the question in a straightforward manner. They flounder about in a comical fashion, pile argument on argument, fish for reasons, plead that "on the one hand" it may be so, but "on the other hand" it may not, their thoughts wander over all and sundry subjects, they try all the time not to see that they are defeating themselves. The "Lefts" are very careful to quote the figures: twelve votes at the Party Congress against peace, twenty-eight votes in favour, but they discreetly refrain from mentioning that of the hundreds of votes cast at the meeting of the Bolshevik group of the Congress of Soviets they obtained less than one-tenth. They have invented a "theory" that the peace was carried by "the exhausted and declassed elements", while it was opposed by "the workers and peasants of the southern regions, where there was greater vitality in economic life and the supply of bread was more assured".... Can one do anything but laugh at this? There is not a word about the voting at the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets in favour of peace, nor about the social and class character of the typically petty-bourgeois and declassed political conglomeration in Russia who were opposed to peace (the Left Socialist-Revolutionary party). In an utterly childish manner, by means of amusing "scientific" explanations, they try to conceal their own bankruptcy, to conceal the facts, the mere review of which would show that it was precisely the declassed, intellectual "cream" of the party, the élite, who opposed the peace with slogans couched in revolutionary petty-bourgeois phrases, that it was precisely the *mass* of workers and exploited peasants who carried the peace.

Nevertheless, in spite of all the above-mentioned declarations and evasions of the "Lefts" on the question of war and peace, the plain and obvious truth manages to come to light. The authors of the theses are compelled to admit that "the conclusion of peace has for the time being weakened the imperialists' attempts to make a deal on a world scale" (this is inaccurately formulated by the "Lefts", but this is not the place to deal with inaccuracies). "The conclusion of peace has already caused the conflict between the imperialist powers to become more acute."

Now this is a fact. Here is something that has *decisive* significance. That is why those who opposed the conclusion of peace were unwittingly playthings in the hands of the imperialists and fell into the trap laid for them by the imperialists. For, until the world socialist revolution breaks out, until it embraces several countries and is strong enough to overcome *international imperialism*, it is the direct duty of the socialists who have conquered in one country (especially a backward one) *not* to accept battle against the giants of imperialism. Their duty is to try to avoid battle, to wait until the conflicts between the imperialists weaken them *even more*, and bring the revolution in other countries even nearer. Our "Lefts" did not understand this simple truth in January, February and March. Even now they are afraid of admitting it openly. But it comes to light through all their confused reasoning like "on the one hand it must be confessed, on the other hand one must admit".

"During the coming spring and summer," the "Lefts" write in their theses, "the collapse of the imperialist system must begin. In the event of a victory for German imperialism in the present phase of the war this collapse can only be postponed, but it will then express itself in even more acute forms."

This formulation is even more childishly inaccurate despite its playing at science. It is natural for children to "understand" science to mean something that can determine in what year, spring, summer, autumn or winter the "collapse must begin".

These are ridiculous, vain attempts to ascertain what cannot be ascertained. No serious politician will ever say when this or that collapse of a "system" "must begin" (the more so that the collapse of the *system* has already begun, and it is now a question of the moment when the outbreak of revolution in *particular* countries will begin). But an indisputable truth forces its way through this childishly helpless formulation, namely, the outbreaks of revolution in other, more advanced, countries are *nearer* now, a month since the beginning of the "respite" which followed the conclusion of peace, than they were a month or six weeks ago.

What follows?

It follows that the peace supporters were absolutely right, and their stand has been justified by the course of events. They were right in having drummed into the minds of the lovers of ostentation that one must be able to calculate the balance of forces and *not help* the imperialists by making the battle against socialism easier for them, when socialism is still weak, and when the chances of the battle are manifestly *against* socialism.

Our "Left" Communists, however, who are also fond of calling themselves "proletarian" Communists, because there is very little that is proletarian about them and very much that is petty-bourgeois, are incapable of giving thought to the balance of forces, to calculating it. This is the core of Marxism and Marxist tactics, but they disdainfully brush aside the "core" with "proud" phrases such as:

"...That the masses have become firmly imbued with an inactive 'peace mentality' is an objective fact of the political situation...."

What a gem! After three years of the most agonising and reactionary war, the people, thanks to Soviet power and its correct tactics, which never lapsed into mere phrase-making, have obtained a very, very brief, insecure and far from sufficient respite. The "Left" intellectual striplings, however, with the magnificence of a self-infatuated Narcissus, profoundly declare "that the masses [???] have become firmly imbued [!!!] with an inactive [!!!???] peace mentality". Was I not right when I said at the Party Congress that the paper or journal of the "Lefts" ought to have been called not *Kommunist* but *Szlachcic*?*

Can a Communist with the slightest understanding of the mentality and the conditions of life of the toiling and exploited people descend to the point of view of the typical declassed petty-bourgeois intellectual with the mental outlook of a noble or *szlachcic*, which declares that a "peace mentality" is "inactive" and believes that the brandishing of a cardboard sword is "activity"? For our "Lefts" merely brandish a cardboard sword when they ignore the universally known fact, of which the war in the Ukraine has served as an additional proof, that peoples utterly exhausted by

* See this volume, p. 105.—*Ed.*

three years of butchery cannot go on fighting without a respite; and that war, if it cannot be organised on a national scale, very often creates a mentality of disintegration peculiar to petty proprietors, instead of the iron discipline of the proletariat. Every page of *Kommunist* shows that our "Lefts" have no idea of iron proletarian discipline and how it is achieved, that they are thoroughly imbued with the mentality of the declassed petty-bourgeois intellectual.

II

Perhaps all these phrases of the "Lefts" about war can be put down to mere childish exuberance, which, moreover, concerns the past, and therefore has not a shadow of political significance? This is the argument some people put up in defence of our "Lefts". But this is wrong. Anyone aspiring to political leadership must be able to *think out* political problems, and lack of this ability converts the "Lefts" into spineless preachers of a policy of vacillation, which objectively can have only one result, namely, by their vacillation the "Lefts" *are helping* the imperialists to provoke the Russian Soviet Republic into a battle that will obviously be to its disadvantage, they *are helping* the imperialists to draw us into a snare. Listen to this:

"...The Russian workers' revolution cannot 'save itself' by abandoning the path of world revolution, by continually avoiding battle and yielding to the pressure of international capital, by making concessions to 'home capital'.

"From this point of view it is necessary to adopt a determined class international policy which will unite international revolutionary propaganda by word and deed, and to strengthen the organic connection with international socialism (and not with the international bourgeoisie)...."

I shall deal separately with the thrusts at home policy contained in this passage. But examine this riot of phrase-making—and timidity in deeds—in the sphere of foreign policy. What tactics *are binding* at the *present* time on all who do not wish to be tools of imperialist provocation, and who do not wish to walk into the snare? Every politician must give a clear, straightforward reply to this

question. Our Party's reply is well known. At the *present* moment we must retreat and avoid battle. Our "Lefts" dare not contradict this and shoot into the air: "A determined class international policy"!!

This is deceiving the people. If you want to fight now, say so openly. If you don't wish to *retreat* now, say so openly. Otherwise, in your objective role, you are a tool of imperialist provocation. And your subjective "mentality" is that of a frenzied petty bourgeois who swaggers and blusters but senses perfectly well that the proletarian is *right* in retreating and in trying to retreat in an organised way. He senses that the proletarian is right in arguing that because we lack strength we must retreat (before Western and Eastern imperialism) even as far as the Urals, for in this lies the *only* chance of playing for time while the revolution in the West matures, the revolution which is not "bound" (despite the twaddle of the "Lefts") to begin in "spring or summer", but which is coming nearer and becoming more probable *every month*.

The "Lefts" have no policy of their "own". They dare *not* declare that retreat at the *present moment* is unnecessary. They twist and turn, play with words, substitute the question of "continuously" avoiding battle for the question of avoiding battle at the *present moment*. They blow soap bubbles such as "international revolutionary propaganda by deed"!! What does this mean?

It can only mean one of two things: either it is mere Nozdryovism,[132] or it means an offensive war to overthrow international imperialism. Such nonsense cannot be uttered openly, and that is why the "Left" Communists are obliged to take refuge from the derision of every politically conscious proletarian behind high-sounding and empty phrases. They hope the inattentive reader will not notice the real meaning of the phrase "international revolutionary propaganda by deed".

The flaunting of high-sounding phrases is characteristic of the declassed petty-bourgeois intellectuals. The organised proletarian Communists will certainly punish this "habit" with nothing less than derision and expulsion from all responsible posts. The people must be told the bitter truth simply, clearly and in a straightforward manner:

it is possible, and even probable, that the war party will again get the upper hand in Germany (that is, an offensive against us will commence at once), and that Germany together with Japan, by official agreement or by tacit understanding, will partition and strangle us. Our tactics, if we do not want to listen to the ranters, must be to wait, procrastinate, avoid battle and retreat. If we shake off the ranters and "brace ourselves" by creating genuinely iron, genuinely proletarian, genuinely communist discipline, we shall have a good chance of gaining many months. And then by retreating even, if the worst comes to the worst, to the Urals, we shall *make it easier* for our ally (the international proletariat) to come to our aid, to "catch up" (to use the language of sport) the distance between the beginning of revolutionary outbreaks and revolution.

These, and these alone, are the tactics which can in fact strengthen the connection between one temporarily isolated section of international socialism and the other sections. But to tell the truth, all that your arguments lead to, dear "Left Communists", is the "strengthening of the organic connection" between one high-sounding phrase and another. A bad sort of "organic connection", this!

I shall enlighten you, my amiable friends, as to why such disaster overtook you. It is because you devote more effort to learning by heart and committing to memory revolutionary slogans than to thinking them out. This leads you to write "the defence of the socialist fatherland" in quotation marks, which are probably meant to signify your attempts at being ironical, but which really prove that you are muddleheads. You are accustomed to regard "defencism" as something base and despicable; you have learned this and committed it to memory. You have learned this by heart so thoroughly that some of you have begun talking nonsense to the effect that defence of the fatherland in an imperialist *epoch* is impermissible (as a matter of fact, it is impermissible only in an imperialist, reactionary war, waged by the bourgeoisie). But you have not thought out why and when "defencism" is abominable.

To recognise defence of the fatherland means recognising the legitimacy and justice of war. Legitimacy and justice from what point of view? Only from the point of view

of the socialist, proletariat and its struggle for its emancipation. We do not recognise any other point of view. If war is waged by the exploiting class with the object of strengthening its rule as a class, such a war is a criminal war, and "defencism" in *such* a war is a base betrayal of socialism. If war is waged by the proletariat after it has conquered the bourgeoisie in its own country, and is waged with the object of strengthening and developing socialism, such a war is legitimate and "holy".

We have been "defencists" since October 25, 1917. I have said this more than once very definitely, and you dare not deny this. It is precisely in the interests of "strengthening the connection" with international socialism that we *are in duty bound* to defend our *socialist* fatherland. Those who treat frivolously the defence of the country in which the proletariat has already achieved victory are the ones who destroy the connection with international socialism. When we were the representatives of an oppressed class we did not adopt a frivolous attitude towards defence of the fatherland in an imperialist war. We opposed such defence on principle. Now that we have become representatives of the ruling class, which has begun to organise socialism, we demand that everybody adopt a *serious* attitude towards defence of the country. And adopting a serious attitude towards defence of the country means thoroughly preparing for it, and strictly calculating the balance of forces. If our forces are obviously small, the best means of defense is *retreat into the interior of the country* (anyone who regards this as an artificial formula, made up to suit the needs of the moment, should read old Clausewitz, one of the greatest authorities on military matters, concerning the lessons of history to be learned in this connection). The "Left Communists", however, do not give the slightest indication that they understand the significance of the question of the balance of forces.

When we were opposed to defencism on principle we were justified in holding up to ridicule those who wanted to "save" their fatherland, ostensibly in the interests of socialism. When we gained the right to be proletarian defencists the whole question was radically altered. It has become our duty to calculate with the utmost accuracy the different forces involved, to weigh with the utmost care the

chances of our ally (the international proletariat) being able to come to our aid in time. It is in the interest of capital to destroy its enemy (the revolutionary proletariat) bit by bit, before the workers in all countries have united (actually united, i.e., by beginning the revolution). It is in our interest to do all that is possible, to take advantage of the slightest opportunity to postpone the decisive battle until the moment (or *until after* the moment) the revolutionary workers' contingents have united in a single great international army.

III

We shall pass on to the misfortunes of our "Left" Communists in the sphere of home policy. It is difficult to read the following phrases in the theses on the *present* situation without smiling.

"...The systematic use of the remaining means of production is conceivable only if a most determined policy of socialisation is pursued" ... "not to capitulate to the bourgeoisie and its petty-bourgeois intellectualist servitors, but to rout the bourgeoisie and to put down sabotage completely...."

Dear "Left Communists", how determined they are, but how little thinking they display. What do they mean by pursuing "a most determined policy of socialisation"?

One may or may not be determined on the question of nationalisation or confiscation, but the whole point is that even the greatest possible "determination" in the world is not enough to pass *from* nationalisation and confiscation *to* socialisation. The misfortune of our "Lefts" is that by their naïve, childish combination of the words "most determined policy of socialisation" they reveal their utter failure to understand the crux of the question, the crux of the "present" situation. The misfortune of our "Lefts" is that they have missed the very essence of the "present situation", the transition from confiscation (the carrying out of which requires above all determination in a politician) to socialisation (the carrying out of which requires a *different* quality in the revolutionary).

Yesterday, the main task of the moment was, as determinedly as possible, to nationalise, confiscate, beat down

and crush the bourgeoisie, and put down sabotage. Today, only a blind man could fail to see that we have nationalised, confiscated, beaten down and put down more *than we have had time to count*. The difference between socialisation and simple confiscation is that confiscation can be carried out by "determination" alone, without the ability to calculate and distribute properly, whereas *socialisation cannot be brought about without this ability.*

The historical service we have rendered is that yesterday we were determined (and we shall be tomorrow) in confiscating, in beating down the bourgeoisie, in putting down sabotage. To write about this today in "theses on the present situation" is to fix one's eyes on the past and to fail to understand the transition to the future.

"...To put down sabotage completely...." What a task they have found! Our saboteurs are quite sufficiently "put down". What we lack is something quite different. We lack the proper *calculation* of which saboteurs to set to work and where to place them. We lack the organisation of our own forces that is needed for, say, one Bolshevik leader or controller to be able to supervise a hundred saboteurs who are now coming into our service. When that is how matters stand, to flaunt such phrases as "a most determined policy of socialisation", "routing", and "completely putting down" is just missing the mark. It is typical of the petty-bourgeois revolutionary not to notice that routing, putting down, etc., is not enough for socialism. It is sufficient for a small proprietor enraged against a big proprietor. But no proletarian revolutionary would ever fall into such error.

If the words we have quoted provoke a smile, the following discovery made by the "Left Communists" will provoke nothing short of Homeric laughter. According to them, under the "Bolshevik deviation to the right" the Soviet Republic is threatened with "evolution towards state capitalism". They have really frightened us this time! And with what gusto these "Left Communists" repeat this threatening revelation in their theses and articles....

It has not occurred to them that state capitalism would be a *step forward* as compared with the present state of affairs in our Soviet Republic. If in approximately six months' time state capitalism became established in our

Republic, this would be a great success and a sure guarantee that within a year socialism will have gained a permanently firm hold and will have become invincible in our country.

I can imagine with what noble indignation a "Left Communist" will recoil from these words, and what "devastating criticism" he will make to the workers against the "Bolshevik deviation to the right". What! Transition to state *capitalism* in the Soviet *Socialist* Republic would be a step forward?... Isn't this the betrayal of socialism?

Here we come to the root of the *economic* mistake of the "Left Communists". And that is why we must deal with this point in greater detail.

Firstly, the "Left Communists" do not understand what kind of *transition* it is from capitalism to socialism that gives us the right and the grounds to call our country the Socialist Republic of Soviets.

Secondly, they reveal their petty-bourgeois mentality precisely by *not recognising* the petty-bourgeois element as the *principal* enemy of socialism in our country.

Thirdly, in making a bugbear of "state capitalism", they betray their failure to understand that the Soviet state differs from the bourgeois state economically.

Let us examine these three points.

No one, I think, in studying the question of the economic system of Russia, has denied its transitional character. Nor, I think, has any Communist denied that the term Socialist Soviet Republic implies the determination of Soviet power to achieve the transition to socialism, and not that the new economic system is recognised as a socialist order.

But what does the word "transition" mean? Does it not mean, as applied to an economy, that the present system contains elements, particles, fragments of *both* capitalism and socialism? Everyone will admit that it does. But not all who admit this take the trouble to consider what elements actually constitute the various socio-economic structures that exist in Russia at the present time. And this is the crux of the question.

Let us enumerate these elements:

1) patriarchal, i.e., to a considerable extent natural, peasant farming;

2) small commodity production (this Includes the majority of those peasants who sell their grain);
3) private capitalism;
4) state capitalism;
5) socialism.

Russia is so vast and so varied that all these different types of socio-economic structures are intermingled. This is what constitutes the specific features of the situation.

The question arises: what elements predominate? Clearly in a small-peasant country, the petty-bourgeois element predominates and it must predominate, for the great majority of those working the land are small commodity producers. The shell of our state capitalism (grain monopoly, state-controlled entrepreneurs and traders, bourgeois co-operators) is pierced now in one place, now in another by *profiteers*, the chief object of profiteering being *grain*.

It is in this field that the main struggle is being waged. Between what elements is this struggle being waged if we are to speak in terms of economic categories such as "state capitalism"? Between the fourth and the fifth in the order in which I have just enumerated them. Of course not. It is not state capitalism that is at war with socialism, but the petty bourgeoisie plus private capitalism fighting together against both state capitalism and socialism. The petty bourgeoisie oppose *every* kind of state interference, accounting and control, whether it be state capitalist or state socialist. This is an absolutely unquestionable fact of reality, and the root of the economic mistake of the "Left Communists" is that they have failed to understand it. The profiteer, the commercial racketeer, the disrupter of monopoly—these are our principal "internal" enemies, the enemies of the economic measures of Soviet power. A hundred and twenty-five years ago it might have been excusable for the French petty bourgeoisie, the most ardent and sincere revolutionaries, to try to crush the profiteer by executing a few of the "chosen" and by making thunderous declamations. Today, however, the purely rhetorical attitude to this question assumed by some Left Socialist-Revolutionaries can rouse nothing but disgust and revulsion in every politically conscious revolutionary. We know perfectly well that the economic basis of profiteering is both the small

proprietors, who are exceptionally widespread in Russia, and private capitalism, of which *every* petty bourgeois is an agent. We know that the million tentacles of this petty-bourgeois hydra now and again encircle various sections of the workers, that, *instead of state monopoly*, profiteering forces its way into every pore of our social and economic organism.

Those who fail to see this show by their blindness that they are slaves of petty-bourgeois prejudices. This is precisely the case with our "Left Communists", who in words (and of course in their deepest convictions) are merciless enemies of the petty bourgeoisie, while in deeds they help only the petty bourgeoisie, serve only this section of the population and express only its point of view by fighting—*in April 1918!!*—against ... "state capitalism". They are wide of the mark!

The petty bourgeoisie have money put away, the few thousand that they made during the war by "honest" and especially by dishonest means. They are the characteristic economic type that serves as the basis of profiteering and private capitalism. Money is a certificate entitling the possessor to receive social wealth; and a vast section of small proprietors, numbering millions, cling to this certificate and conceal it from the "state". They do not believe in socialism or communism, and "mark time" until the proletarian storm blows over. Either we subordinate the petty bourgeoisie to *our* control and accounting (we can do this if we organise the poor, that is, the majority of the population or semi-proletarians, around the politically conscious proletarian vanguard), or they will overthrow our workers' power as surely and as inevitably as the revolution was overthrown by the Napoleons and Cavaignacs who sprang from this very soil of petty proprietorship. This is how the question stands. Only the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries fail to see this plain and evident truth through their mist of empty phrases about the "toiling" peasants. But who takes these phrase-mongering Left Socialist-Revolutionaries seriously?

The petty bourgeois who hoards his thousands is an enemy of state capitalism. He wants to employ his thousands just for himself, against the poor, in opposition to any

kind of state control. And the sum total of these thousands, amounting to many thousands of millions, forms the base for profiteering, which undermines our socialist construction. Let us assume that a certain number of workers produce in a few days values equal to 1,000. Let us then assume that 200 of this total vanishes owing to petty profiteering, various kinds of embezzlement and the "evasion" by the small proprietors of Soviet decrees and regulations. Every politically conscious worker will say that if better order and organisation could be obtained at the price of 300 out of the 1,000 he would willingly give 300 instead of 200, for it will be quite easy under Soviet power to reduce this "tribute" later on to, say, 100 or 50, once order and organisation are established and once the petty-bourgeois disruption of state monopoly is completely overcome.

This simple illustration in figures, which I have deliberately simplified to the utmost in order to make it absolutely clear, explains the present *correlation* of state capitalism and socialism. The workers hold state power and have every legal opportunity of "taking" the whole thousand, without giving up a single kopek, except for socialist purposes. This legal opportunity, which rests upon the actual transition of power to the workers, is an element of socialism.

But in many ways, the small proprietary and private capitalist element undermines this legal position, drags in profiteering, hinders the execution of Soviet decrees. State capitalism would be a gigantic step forward *even if* we paid *more* than we are paying at present (I took a numerical example deliberately to bring this out more sharply), because it is worth while paying for "tuition", because it is useful for the workers, because victory over disorder, economic ruin and laxity is the most important thing; because the continuation of the anarchy of small ownership is the greatest, the most serious danger, and it will *certainly* be our ruin (unless we overcome it), whereas not only will the payment of a heavier tribute to state capitalism not ruin us, it will lead us to socialism by the surest road. When the working class has learned how to defend the state system against the anarchy of small ownership, when it has learned to organise large-scale production on a national scale, along state capitalist lines, it will hold, if I may use the

expression, all the trump cards, and the consolidation of socialism will be assured.

In the first place, *economically*, state capitalism is immeasurably superior to our present economic system.

In the second place, there is nothing terrible in it for Soviet power, for the Soviet state is a state in which the power of the workers and the poor is assured. The "Left Communists" failed to understand these unquestionable truths, which, of course, a "Left Socialist-Revolutionary", who cannot connect any ideas on political economy in his head in general, will never understand, but which every Marxist *must* admit. It is not even worth while arguing with a Left Socialist-Revolutionary. It is enough to point to him as a "repulsive example" of a windbag. But the "Left Communists" *must* be argued with because it is Marxists who are making a mistake, and an analysis of their mistake will help the *working class* to find the true road.

IV

To make things even clearer, let us first of all take the most concrete example of state capitalism. Everybody knows what this example is. It is Germany. Here we have "the last word" in modern large-scale capitalist engineering and planned organisation, *subordinated to Junker-bourgeois imperialism*. Cross out the words in italics, and in place of the militarist, Junker, bourgeois, imperialist *state* put *also a state*, but of a different social type, of a different class content—a *Soviet* state, that is, a proletarian state, and you will have the *sum total* of the conditions necessary for socialism.

Socialism is inconceivable without large-scale capitalist engineering based on the latest discoveries of modern science. It is inconceivable without planned state organisation, which keeps tens of millions of people to the strictest observance of a unified standard in production and distribution. We Marxists have always spoken of this, and it is not worth while wasting two seconds talking to people who do not understand *even* this (anarchists and a good half of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

At the same time socialism is inconceivable unless the proletariat is the ruler of the state. This also is ABC. And history (which nobody, except Menshevik blockheads of the first order, ever expected to bring about "complete" socialism smoothly, gently, easily and simply) has taken such a peculiar course that it *has given birth* in 1918 to two unconnected halves of socialism existing side by side like two future chickens in the single shell of international imperialism. In 1918 Germany and Russia have become the most striking embodiment of the material realisation of the economic, the productive and the socio-economic conditions for socialism, on the one hand, and the political conditions, on the other.

A successful proletarian revolution in Germany would immediately and very easily smash any shell of imperialism (which unfortunately is made of the best steel, and hence cannot be broken by the efforts of *any* ... chicken) and would bring about the victory of world socialism for certain, without any difficulty, or with slight difficulty—if, of course, by "difficulty" we mean difficult on a world-historical scale, and not in the parochial philistine sense.

While the revolution in Germany is still slow in "coming forth", our task is to study the state capitalism of the Germans, to spare *no effort* in copying it and not shrink from adopting *dictatorial* methods to hasten the copying of it. Our task is to hasten this copying even more than Peter hastened the copying of Western culture by barbarian Russia, and we must not hesitate to use barbarous methods in fighting barbarism. If there are anarchists and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (I recall off-hand the speeches of Karelin and Ghe at the meeting of the Central Executive Committee) who indulge in Narcissus-like reflections and say that it is unbecoming for us revolutionaries to "take lessons" from German imperialism, there is only one thing we can say in reply: the revolution that took these people seriously would perish irrevocably (and deservedly).

At present, petty-bourgeois capitalism prevails in Russia, and it is *one and the same road* that leads from it to *both* large-scale state capitalism and to socialism, *through one and the same* intermediary station called "national accounting and control of production and distribution". Those

who fail to understand this are committing an unpardonable mistake in economics. Either they do not know the facts of life, do not see what actually exists and are unable to look the truth in the face, or they confine themselves to abstractly comparing "capitalism" with "socialism" and fail to study the concrete forms and stages of the transition that is taking place in our country. Let it be said in parenthesis that this is the very theoretical mistake which misled the best people in the *Novaya Zhizn* and *Vperyod* camp. The worst and the mediocre of these, owing to their stupidity and spinelessness, tag along behind the bourgeoisie, of whom they stand in awe. The best of them have failed to understand that it was not without reason that the teachers of socialism spoke of a whole period of transition from capitalism to socialism and emphasised the "prolonged birth-pangs" of the new society. And this new society is again an abstraction which can come into being only by passing through a series of varied, imperfect concrete attempts to create this or that socialist state.

It is because Russia cannot advance from the economic situation now existing here without traversing the ground which *is common* to state capitalism and to socialism (national accounting and control) that the attempt to frighten others as well as themselves with "evolution *towards* state capitalism" (*Kommunist* No. 1, p. 8, col. 1) is utter theoretical nonsense. This is letting one's thoughts wander away from the true road of "evolution", and failing to understand what this road is. In practice, it is equivalent to pulling us back to small proprietary capitalism.

In order to convince the reader that this is not the first time I have given this "high" appreciation of state capitalism and that I gave it *before* the Bolsheviks seized power I take the liberty of quoting the following passage from my pamphlet *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It*, written in September 1917.

"...Try to substitute *for* the Junker-capitalist state, for the landowner-capitalist state, a *revolutionary-democratic* state, i.e., a state which in a revolutionary way abolishes *all* privileges and does not fear to introduce the fullest democracy in a revolutionary way. You will find that, given a really revolutionary-democratic state, state-monop-

oly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably implies a step, and more than one step, towards socialism!

"...For socialism is merely the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly.

"...State-monopoly capitalism is a complete *material* preparation for socialism, the *threshold* of socialism, a rung on the ladder of history between which and the rung called socialism *there are no intermediate rungs*" (pp. 27 and 28).*

Please note that this was written when Kerensky was in power, that we are discussing *not* the dictatorship of the proletariat, *not* the socialist state, but the "revolutionary-democratic" state. Is it not clear that the *higher* we stand on this political ladder, *the more completely* we incorporate the socialist state and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviets, *the less* ought we to fear "state capitalism"? Is it not clear that from the *material*, economic and productive point of view, we are not yet on "the threshold" of socialism? Is it not clear that we cannot pass through the door of socialism without crossing "the threshold" we have not yet reached?

From whatever side we approach the question, only one conclusion can be drawn: the argument of the "Left Communists" about the "state capitalism" which is alleged to be threatening us is an utter mistake in economics and is evident proof that they are complete slaves of petty-bourgeois ideology.

V

The following is also extremely instructive.

When we argued with Comrade Bukharin in the Central Executive Committee,** he declared, among other things, that on the question of high salaries for specialists "we" (evidently meaning the "Left Communists") were "more to the right than Lenin", for in this case "we" saw no deviation from principle, bearing in mind Marx's words that under certain conditions it is more expedient for the working class to "buy out the whole lot of them"[133] (namely, the

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* See present edition, Vol. 25, pp. 361, 362, 363.—*Ed.*

** See this volume, p. 310.—*Ed.*

whole lot of capitalists, i.e., *to buy from* the bourgeoisie the land, factories, works and other means of production).

This extremely interesting statement shows, in the first place, that Bukharin is head and shoulders above the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and anarchists, that he is by no means hopelessly stuck in the mud of phrase-making, but on the contrary is making efforts to think out the *concrete* difficulties of the transition—the painful and difficult transition—from capitalism to socialism.

In the second place, this statement makes Bukharin's mistake still more glaring.

Let us consider Marx's idea carefully.

Marx was talking about the Britain of the seventies of the last century, about the culminating point in the development of pre-monopoly capitalism. At that time Britain was a country in which militarism and bureaucracy were less pronounced than in any other, a country in which there was the greatest possibility of a "peaceful" victory for socialism in the sense of the workers "buying out" the bourgeoisie. And Marx said that under certain conditions the workers would certainly not refuse to buy out the bourgeoisie. Marx did not commit himself, or the future leaders of the socialist revolution, to matters of form, to ways and means of bringing about the revolution. He understood perfectly well that a vast number of new problems would arise, that the whole situation would change in the course of the revolution, and that the situation would change *radically* and *often* in the course of revolution.

Well, and what about Soviet Russia? Is it not clear that *after* the seizure of power by the proletariat and *after* the crushing of the exploiters' armed resistance and sabotage, *certain* conditions prevail which correspond to those which might have existed in Britain half a century ago had a peaceful transition to socialism begun there? The subordination of the capitalists to the workers in Britain would have been assured at that time owing to the following circumstances: (1) the absolute preponderance of workers, of proletarians, in the population owing to the absence of a peasantry (in Britain in the seventies there was hope of an extremely rapid spread of socialism among agricultural labourers); (2) the excellent organisation of the proletariat

in trade unions (Britain was at that time the leading country in the world in this respect); (3) the comparatively high level of culture of the proletariat, which had been trained by centuries of development of political liberty; (4) the old habit of the well-organised British capitalists of settling political and economic questions by compromise—at that time the British capitalists were better organised than the capitalists of any country in the world (this superiority has now passed to Germany). These were the circumstances which at that time gave rise to the idea that the *peaceful* subjugation of the British capitalists by the workers was possible.

In our country, at the present time, this subjugation is assured by certain premises of fundamental significance (the victory in October and the suppression, from October to February, of the capitalists' armed resistance and sabotage). But *instead of* the absolute preponderance of workers, of proletarians, in the population, and *instead of* a high degree of organisation among them, the important factor of victory in Russia was the support the proletarians received from the poor peasants and those who had experienced sudden ruin. Finally, we have neither a high degree of culture nor the habit of compromise. If these concrete conditions are carefully considered, it will become clear that we can and ought to employ two methods *simultaneously*. On the one hand we must ruthlessly suppress* the uncultured capitalists who refuse to have anything to do with "state capitalism" or to consider any form of compromise, and who continue by means of profiteering, by bribing the poor peasants, etc., to hinder the realisation of the measures

* In this case also we must look truth in the face. We stlll have too little of that ruthlessness which is indispensable for the success of socialism, and we have too little not because we lack determination. We have sufficient determination. What we do lack is the ability to *catch* quickly enough a sufficient number of profiteers, racketeers and capitalists—the people who infringe the measures passed by the Soviets. The "ability" to do this can only be acquired by establishing accounting and control! Another thing is that the courts are not sufficiently firm. Instead of sentencing people who take bribes to be shot, they sentence them to six months' imprisonment. These two defects have the same social root: the influence of the petty-bourgeois element, its flabbiness.

taken by the Soviets. On the other hand, we must use the *method of compromise*, or of buying off the cultured capitalists who agree to "state capitalism", who are capable of putting it into practice and who are useful to the proletariat as intelligent and experienced organisers of the *largest* types of enterprises, which actually supply products to tens of millions of people.

Bukharin is an extremely well-read Marxist economist. He therefore remembered that Marx was profoundly right when he taught the workers the importance of preserving the organisation of large-scale production, precisely for the purpose of facilitating the transition to socialism. Marx taught that (as an exception, and Britain was then an exception) the idea was conceivable of *paying the capitalists well*, of buying them off, *if* the circumstances were such as to compel the capitalists to submit peacefully and to come over to socialism in a cultured and organised fashion, provided they were paid.

But Bukharin went astray because he did not go deep enough into the specific features of the situation in Russia at the present time—an exceptional situation when we, the Russian proletariat, are in *advance* of any Britain or any Germany as regards our political order, as regards the strength of the workers' political power, but are *behind* the most backward West-European country as regards organising a good state capitalism, as regards our level of culture and the degree of material and productive preparedness for the "introduction" of socialism. Is it not clear that the specific nature of the present situation creates the need for a specific type of "buying out" which the workers must offer to the most cultured, the most skilled, the most capable organisers among the capitalists who are ready to enter the service of Soviet power and to help honestly in organising "state" production on the largest possible scale? Is it not clear that in this specific situation we must make, every effort to avoid two mistakes, both of which are of a petty-bourgeois nature? On the one hand, it would be a fatal mistake to declare that since there is a discrepancy between our economic "forces" and our political strength, it "follows" that we should not have seized power.[134] Such an argument can be advanced only by a 'man in a muffler",[135]

who forgets that there will always be such a "discrepancy", that it always exists in the development of nature as well as in the development of society, that only by a series of attempts—each of which, taken by itself, will be one-sided and will suffer from certain inconsistencies—will complete socialism be created by the revolutionary co-operation of the proletarians of *all* countries.

On the other hand, it would be an obvious mistake to give free rein to ranters and phrase-mongers who allow themselves to be carried away by the "dazzling" revolutionary spirit, but who are incapable of sustained, thoughtful and deliberate revolutionary work which takes into account the most difficult stages of transition.

Fortunately, the history of the development of the revolutionary parties and of the struggle that Bolshevism waged against them has left us a heritage of sharply defined types, of which the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and anarchists are striking examples of bad revolutionaries. They are now shouting hysterically, choking and shouting themselves hoarse, against the "compromise" of the "Right Bolsheviks". But they are incapable of thinking *what* is bad in "compromise", and *why* "compromise" has been justly condemned by history and the course of the revolution.

Compromise in Kerensky's time meant the surrender of power to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and the question of power is the fundamental question of every revolution. Compromise by a section of the Bolsheviks in October-November 1917 either meant that they feared the proletariat seizing power or wished to *share* power equally, not only with "unreliable fellow-travellers" like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, but also with the enemies, with the Chernovists and the Mensheviks. The latter would inevitably have hindered us in fundamental matters, such as the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the ruthless suppression of the Bogayevskys, the universal setting up of the Soviet institutions, and in every act of confiscation.

Now power has been seized, retained and consolidated in the hands of a single party, the party of the proletariat, even without the "unreliable fellow-travellers". To speak of compromise at the present time when there is no question, and can be none, of sharing *power*, of renouncing the

dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, is merely to repeat, parrot-fashion, words which have been learned by heart but not understood. To describe as "compromise" the fact that, having arrived at a situation when we can and must rule the country, we try to win over to our side, not grudging the cost, the most skilled people capitalism has trained and to take them into our service against small proprietary disintegration, reveals a total incapacity to think out the economic tasks of socialist construction.

Therefore, while it is to Comrade Bukharin's credit that on the Central Executive Committee he "felt ashamed" of the "service" he had been rendered by Karelin and Ghe, nevertheless, as far as the "Left Communist" *trend* is concerned, the reference to their political comrades-in-arms still remains a serious warning.

Take, for example, *Znamya Truda*, the organ of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, of April 25, 1918, which proudly declares, "The present position of our party coincides with that of another trend in Bolshevism (Bukharin, Pokrovsky and others)". Or take the Menshevik *Vperyod* of the same date, which contains among other articles the following "thesis" by the notorious Menshevik Isuv:

"The policy of Soviet power, from the very outset devoid of a genuinely proletarian character, has lately pursued more and more openly a course of compromise with the bourgeoisie and has assumed an obviously anti-working-class character. On the pretext of nationalising industry, they are pursuing a policy of establishing industrial trusts, and on the pretext of restoring the productive forces of the country, they are attempting to abolish the eight-hour day, to introduce piece-work and the Taylor system, black lists and victimisation. This policy threatens to deprive the proletariat of its most important economic gains and to make it a victim of unrestricted exploitation by the bourgeoisie."

Isn't it marvellous?

Kerensky's friends, who, together with him, conducted an imperialist war for the sake of the secret treaties, which promised annexations to the Russian capitalists, the colleagues of Tsereteli, who, on June 11, threatened to disarm the workers,[136] the Lieberdans, who screened the rule of

the bourgeoisie with high-sounding phrases—these are the very people who accuse Soviet power of "compromising with the bourgeoisie", of "establishing trusts" (that is, of establishing "state capitalism"!), of introducing the Taylor system.

Indeed, the Bolsheviks ought to present Isuv with a medal, and his thesis ought to be exhibited in every workers' club and union as an example of the *provocative speeches of the bourgeoisie*. The workers know these Lieberdans, Tseretelis and Isuvs very well now. They know them from experience, and it would be extremely useful indeed for the workers to think over the reason why *such lackeys of the bourgeoisie* should incite the workers to resist the Taylor system and the "establishment of trusts".

Class-conscious workers will carefully compare the "thesis" of Isuv, a friend of the Lieberdans and the Tseretelis, with the following thesis of the "Left Communists".

"The introduction of labour discipline in connection with the restoration of capitalist management of industry cannot considerably increase the productivity of labour, but it will diminish the class initiative, activity and organisation of the proletariat. It threatens to enslave the working class; it will rouse discontent among the backward elements as well as among the vanguard of the proletariat. In order to implement this system in the face of the hatred prevailing among the proletariat against the 'capitalist saboteurs', the Communist Party would have to rely on the petty bourgeoisie, as against the workers, and in this way would ruin itself as the party of the proletariat" (*Kommunist* No. 1, p. 8, col. 2).

This is most striking proof that the "Lefts" have fallen into the trap, have allowed themselves to be provoked by the Isuvs and the other Judases of capitalism. It serves as a good lesson for the workers, who know that it is precisely the vanguard of the proletariat which stands for the introduction of labour discipline, and that it is precisely the petty bourgeoisie which is doing its utmost to disrupt this discipline. Speeches such as the thesis of the "Lefts" quoted above are a terrible disgrace and imply the complete renunciation of communism in practice and complete desertion to the camp of the petty bourgeoisie.

"In connection with the restoration of capitalist management"—these are the words with which the "Left Communists" hope to "defend themselves". A perfectly useless defence, because, in the first place, when putting "management" in the hands of capitalists Soviet power appoints workers' Commissars or workers' committees who watch the manager's every step, who learn from his management experience and who not only have the right to appeal against his orders, but can secure his removal through the organs of Soviet power. In the second place, "management" is entrusted to capitalists only for executive functions while at work, the conditions of which are determined by the Soviet power, by which they may be abolished or revised. In the third place, "management" is entrusted by the Soviet power to capitalists not as capitalists, but as technicians or organisers for higher salaries. And the workers know very well that ninety-nine per cent of the organisers and first-class technicians of really large-scale and giant enterprises, trusts or other establishments belong to the capitalist class. But it is precisely these people whom we, the proletarian party, must appoint to "manage" the labour process and the organisation of production, for there are no other people who have practical experience in this matter. The workers, having grown out of the infancy when they could have been misled by "Left" phrases or petty-bourgeois loose thinking, are advancing towards socialism precisely through the capitalist management of trusts, through gigantic machine industry, through enterprises which have a turnover of several millions per year—only through such a system of production and such enterprises. The workers are not petty bourgeois. They are not afraid of large-scale "state capitalism", they prize it as their *proletarian* weapon which *their Soviet* power will use against small proprietary disintegration and disorganisation.

This is incomprehensible only to the declassed and consequently thoroughly petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, typified among the "Left Communists" by Osinsky, when he writes in their journal:

"...The whole initiative in the organisation and management of any enterprise will belong to the 'organisers of the trusts'. We are not going to *teach* them, or make

rank-and-file workers out of them, we are going to *learn* from them" (*Kommunist* No. 1, p. 14, col. 2).

The attempted irony in this passage is aimed at my words "learn socialism from the organisers of the trusts".

Osinsky thinks this is funny. He wants to make "rank-and-file workers" out of the organisers of the trusts. If this had been written by a man of the age of which the poet wrote "But fifteen years, not more?..."[137] there would have been nothing surprising about it. But it is somewhat strange to hear such things from a Marxist who has learned that socialism is impossible unless it makes use of the achievements of the engineering and culture created by large-scale capitalism. There is no trace of Marxism in this.

No. Only those are worthy of the name of Communists who understand that it is *impossible* to create or introduce socialism *without learning* from the organisers of the trusts. For socialism is not a figment of the imagination, but the assimilation and application by the proletarian vanguard, which has seized power, of what has been created by the trusts. We, the party of the proletariat, have *no other way* of acquiring the ability to organise large-scale production on trust lines, as trusts are organised, except by acquiring it from first-class capitalist experts.

We have nothing to teach them, unless we undertake the childish task of "teaching" the bourgeois intelligentsia socialism. We must not teach them, but expropriate them (as is being done in Russia "determinedly" enough), *put a stop* to their sabotage, *subordinate* them as a section or group to Soviet power. We, on the other hand, if we are not Communists of infantile age and infantile understanding, must learn from them, and there is something to learn, for the party of the proletariat and its vanguard have *no experience* of independent work in organising giant enterprises which serve the needs of scores of millions of people.

The best workers in Russia have realised this. They have begun to learn from the capitalist organisers, the managing engineers and the technicians. They have begun to learn steadily and cautiously with easy things, gradually passing on to the more difficult things. If things are going more slowly in the iron and steel and engineering industries, it is

because they present greater difficulties. But the textile and tobacco workers and tanners are not afraid of "state capitalism" or of "learning from the organisers of the trusts", as the declassed petty-bourgeois intelligentsia are. These workers in the central leading institutions like Chief Leather Committee and Central Textile Committee take their place by the side of the capitalists, *learn from them*, establish trusts, establish "state capitalism", which under Soviet power represents the threshold of socialism, the condition of its firm victory.

This work of the advanced workers of Russia, together with their work of introducing labour discipline, has begun and is proceeding quietly, unobtrusively, without the noise and fuss so necessary to some "Lefts". It is proceeding very cautiously and gradually, taking into account the lessons of practical experience. This hard work, the work of *learning* practically how to build up large-scale production, is the guarantee that we are on the right road, the guarantee that the class-conscious workers in Russia are carrying on the struggle against small proprietary disintegration and disorganisation, against petty-bourgeois indiscipline*—the guarantee of the victory of communism.

VI

Two remarks in conclusion.

In arguing with the "Left Communists" on April 4, 1918 (see *Kommunist* No. 1, p. 4, footnote), I put it to them bluntly: "Explain what you are dissatisfied with in the railway decree; submit *your* amendments to it. It is your duty as Soviet leaders of the proletariat to do so, otherwise what you say is nothing but empty phrases."

* It is extremely characteristic that the authors of the theses do not say a single word about the significance of the *dictatorship* of the proletariat in the *economic* sphere. They talk only of the "organisation" and so on. But that is accepted also by the petty bourgeoisie, who shun *dictatorship* by the workers in economic relations. A proletarian revolutionary could never at such a moment "forget" this core of the proletarian revolution, which is directed against the economic foundations of capitalism.

The first issue of *Kommunist* appeared on April 20, 1918, but did not contain a *single word* about how, according to the "Left Communists", the railway decree should be altered or amended.

The "Left Communists" stand condemned by their own silence. They did nothing but *attack* the railway decree with all sorts of insinuations (pp. 8 and 16 of No. 1), they *gave no* articulate answer to the question, "How should the decree be amended if it is wrong?"

No comment is needed. The class-conscious workers will call *such* "criticism" of the railway decree (which is a typical example of our line of action, the line of firmness, the line of dictatorship, the line of proletarian discipline) either "Isuvian" criticism or empty phrase-making.

Second remark. The first issue of *Kommunist* contained a very flattering review by Comrade Bukharin of my pamphlet *The State and Revolution*. But however much I value the opinion of people like Bukharin, my conscience compels me to say that the *character* of the review reveals a sad and significant fact. Bukharin regards the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship from the point of view of the *past* and not of the future. Bukharin noted and emphasised what the proletarian revolutionary and the petty-bourgeois revolutionary may have in common on the question of the state. But Bukharin "overlooked" the very thing that distinguishes the one from the other.

Bukharin noted and emphasised that the old state machinery must be "smashed" and "blown up", that the bourgeoisie must be "finally and completely strangled" and so on. The frenzied petty bourgeoisie may also want this. And this, in the main, is what our revolution has *already* done between October 1917 and February 1918.

In my pamphlet I also mention what even the most revolutionary petty bourgeois cannot want, what the class-conscious proletarian does want, what our revolution has *not yet* accomplished. On this task, the task of tomorrow, Bukharin said nothing.

And I have all the more reason not to be silent on this point, because, in the first place, a Communist is expected to devote greater attention to the tasks of tomorrow, and not of yesterday, and, in the second place, my pamphlet

was written *before* the Bolsheviks seized power, when it was impossible to treat the Bolsheviks to vulgar petty-bourgeois arguments such as: "Yes, *of course*, *after* seizing power, you begin to talk about discipline."

"...Socialism will develop into communism ... since people will become accustomed to observing the elementary conditions of social life without violence and without subordination." (*The State and Revolution*, pp. 77-78*; thus, "elementary conditions" were discussed before the seizure of power.)

"...Only then will democracy begin to wither away ..." when "people gradually become accustomed to observing the elementary rules of social intercourse that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all copy-book maxims; they will become accustomed to observing them without force, without coercion, without the special apparatus for coercion called the state" (*ibid.*, p. 84**; thus mention was made of "copy-book maxims" *before* the seizure of power).

"...The higher phase of the development of communism" (from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs) "...presupposes not the present productivity of labour and not the present ordinary run of people, who, like the seminary students in Pomyalovsky's stories, are capable of damaging the stocks of public wealth just for fun, and of demanding the impossible" (*ibid.*, p. 91).***

"Until the higher phase of communism arrives, the socialists demand the strictest control by society and by the state over the measure of labour and the measure of consumption ..." (*ibid.*).

"Accounting and control—that is mainly what is needed for the smooth working, for the proper functioning of the first phase of communist society" (*ibid.*, p. 95).**** And this control must be established not only over "the insignificant capitalist minority, over the gentry who wish to preserve their capitalist habits", but also over the

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* See present edition, Vol. 25, p. 461.—*Ed.*
** *Ibid.*, p. 467.—*Ed.*
*** *Ibid.*, p. 474.—*Ed.*
**** *Ibid.*, p. 478.—*Ed.*

workers who "have been thoroughly corrupted by capitalism" (*ibid.*, p. 96)* and over the "parasites, the sons of the wealthy, the swindlers and other guardians of capitalist traditions" (*ibid.*).

It is significant that Bukharin did *not* emphasise *this*.

May 5, 1918

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* *Ibid.*, Vol. 25, p. 479.—*Ed.*

DECISION OF THE C.C., R.C.P.(B.) ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION[138]

To yield to the German ultimatum. The British ultimatum to be rejected. (For war against Germany threatens greater losses and calamities than against Japan.)

In view of the obvious political alliance between the Ukrainian and Russian counter-revolution, martial law to be instituted against the bourgeoisie.

Every effort to be exerted for defence of the Urals-Kuznetsk area and territory from both Japan and Germany.*

Negotiations to be conducted with Mirbach to ascertain whether Finland and the Ukraine are being obliged to conclude peace with Russia, and to hasten this peace in every way, while recognising that it will bring about new annexations.

Adopted in the C.C.
on Monday, May 6,
1918, *at night*

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the manuscript

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* Immediate evacuation to the Urals of everything in general and of the Stationery Office in particular.

MAIN PROPOSITIONS OF THE DECREE ON FOOD DICTATORSHIP[139]

The draft decision to be revised in the following way:

1) delete the references to the international situation;

2) insert that after peace with the Ukraine we shall be left with *only just enough* grain to save us from famine;

3) insert that decisions of the dictator will be checked by his collegium, which has the right, without holding up implementation, to appeal to the Council of People's Commissars;

4) insert that decisions which by their nature are connected with the Commissariat for Ways of Communication or the Supreme Economic Council are to be adopted by consultation with the appropriate departments;

5) give a more precise legal formulation of the rights of the Commissar for Food;

6) emphasise more strongly the basic idea of the necessity, for salvation from famine, of conducting and carrying through a ruthless and terrorist struggle and war against peasant or other bourgeois elements who retain surplus grain for themselves;

7) lay down precisely that owners of grain who possess surplus grain and do not *send it to* the depots and places of grain collection will be declared *enemies of the people* and will be subject to imprisonment for a term of not less than ten years, confiscation of all their property and expulsion for ever from the community;

8) insert an addition on the duty of working peasants who are propertyless and do not possess surpluses to join forces for ruthless struggle against the kulaks;

9) define precisely the relation of the delegate committees to the gubernia food committees and the rights and duties of the former in carrying out food work.

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PROTEST TO THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT AGAINST THE OCCUPATION OF THE CRIMEA[140]

May 11, 1918

In connection with the wireless message from the Commander-in-Chief of the German troops in the East.

The People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs considers it necessary to express its emphatic protest to the German Government:

1) On no occasion nor in any document has the German Government made any statement to us alleging that our fleet has taken part in fighting against German troops in the Ukraine.

2) Consequently the statement to this effect in the wireless message of May 11, 1918, is clearly untrue and is not confirmed in the acts of the German Government.

3) If part of the fleet considered itself attached to the Ukrainian fleet, it remained in Sevastopol.

3 bis) If our fleet left Sevastopol this happened only after the Germans' offensive and the attack on Sevastopol; consequently, in this case clearly the Brest Treaty was violated by the Germans and not by us.

4) The facts prove, therefore, that we firmly stand by the Brest Treaty, but that the Germans have violated it by occupying the entire Crimea.

5) They have occupied it solely with German troops, removing therefrom all Ukrainians.

6) They have occupied the Crimea after the German Government in its wireless message of the month of ..., 1918,[141] had quite precisely stated that it considered the Crimea not to be part of the territory of the Ukraine.

7) The German Ambassador Mirbach has stated to our Commissar for Foreign Affairs that Germany is not claiming new territorial acquisitions.

8) If at the present time the German Government has adopted a different position and is presenting demands for the Crimea or part of the Crimea or other territorial acquisitions, we consider that complete clarity in this matter is absolutely necessary, and we state again officially that for our part we insist on the conclusion of a precisely formulated peace with Finland, the Ukraine and Turkey, which is waging war in defiance of the Brest Peace Treaty.

9) We once again insistently request the German Government to inform us whether it holds the view that peace with the Ukraine, Finland and Turkey is desirable, and what steps it has undertaken or will undertake with this aim.

10) On the question of the Black Sea fleet we agree to give any new guarantees of its non-intervention in the war or of its disarmament (concerning which Ambassador Mirbach made an official statement to us yesterday, May 10, 1918), provided the German Government informs us of the exact terms of a complete peace, i.e., peace with Finland and the Ukraine and Turkey, and provided this peace is concluded, on which we insist.

11) Nor do we in any way refuse to return the fleet to Sevastopol if this port—in accordance with Mirbach's statement of May 10, 1918, in a conversation with the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs—is not annexed in one form or another and is not occupied by Germany, and a clearly defined peace with the Germans, constituting part of the Finnish, Ukrainian and Turkish armies, is concluded.

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according to the manuscript

THESES ON THE PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION[142]

I

The extreme instability of the international situation of the Soviet Republic, surrounded as it is by imperialist powers, has been frequently pointed out in the Bolshevik press and has been admitted in the resolutions of the higher organs of Soviet power.

During the past few days, i.e., the first ten days of May 1918, the political situation has become extremely critical owing to both external and internal causes:

First, the direct offensive of the counter-revolutionary forces (Semyonov and others) with the aid of the Japanese in the Far East has been stepped up, and in connection with it there are a number of signs indicating the possibility of the entire anti-German imperialist coalition coming to an agreement on the presentation of an ultimatum to Russia—either fight against Germany, or there will be a Japanese invasion aided by us.

Secondly, since Brest the war party has gained the upper hand in German politics in general, and this party could now, at any moment, gain the upper hand on the question of an immediate general offensive against Russia, i.e., it could completely overcome the other policy of German bourgeois-imperialist circles that strive for fresh annexations in Russia but for the time being want peace with her and not a general offensive against her.

Thirdly, the restoration of bourgeois-landowner monarchism in the Ukraine with the support of the Constitutional-Democratic and Octobrist elements of the bourgeoisie of all Russia and with the aid of the German troops was bound

to make the struggle against the counter-revolution in Russia more intense, was bound to encourage the plans and raise the spirit of our counter-revolutionaries.

Fourthly, the disorganised food situation has become extremely acute and in many places has led to real hunger both because we were cut off from Rostov-on-Don and because of the efforts of the petty bourgeoisie and the capitalists in general to sabotage the grain monopoly, accompanied by insufficiently firm, disciplined and ruthless opposition on the part of the ruling class, i.e., the proletariat, to those strivings, efforts and attempts.

II

The foreign policy of Soviet power must not be changed in any way. Our military preparations are not yet complete, and our general slogan, therefore, will remain as before—manoeuvre, withdraw, bide our time, and continue our preparations with all our might.

Although we do not in general reject military agreements with one of the imperialist coalitions against the other in those cases in which such an agreement could, without undermining the basis of Soviet power, strengthen its position and paralyse the attacks of any imperialist power, we cannot at the present moment enter into a military agreement with the Anglo-French coalition. For them, the importance of such an agreement would be the diversion of German troops from the West, i.e., by means of the advance of many Japanese army corps into the interior of European Russia, which is an unacceptable condition since it would mean the complete collapse of Soviet power. If the Anglo-French coalition were to present us with an ultimatum of this kind we should reject it, because the danger of the Japanese advance can more easily be paralysed (or can be delayed for a longer time) than the threat of the Germans occupying Petrograd, Moscow and a large part of European Russia.

III

In considering the tasks of the foreign policy of Soviet power at the present moment, the greatest caution, discretion and restraint must be observed in order not to help

the extreme elements in the war parties of Japan and Germany by any ill-considered or hasty step.

The fact of the matter is that the extreme elements in the war parties of both these countries favour an immediate general offensive against Russia for the purpose of occupying all her territory and overthrowing Soviet power. At any moment these extreme elements may gain the upper hand.

On the other hand, however, it is an undoubted fact that the majority of the imperialist bourgeoisie in Germany are against such a policy and at the present moment prefer the annexationist peace with Russia to a continuation of the war for the simple reason that war would divert forces from the West and increase the instability of the internal situation in Germany that is already making itself felt; it would also make it difficult to obtain raw materials from places involved in insurrection or that are suffering from damage to railways, from failure to plant sufficient crops, etc., etc.

The Japanese urge to attack Russia is being held back, first, by the danger of the movement and of revolts in China, and secondly, there is a certain antagonism on the part of America, the latter fearing the strengthening of Japan and hoping to obtain raw materials from Russia more easily under peaceful conditions.

It goes without saying that it is quite possible for the extreme elements of the war parties in both Germany and Japan to gain the upper hand at any moment. There can be no guarantee against this until the revolution breaks out in Germany. The American bourgeoisie may plot together with the Japanese bourgeoisie, or the Japanese with the German. It is, therefore, our imperative duty to make the most energetic preparations for war.

As long as there remains even a slight chance of preserving peace or of concluding peace with Finland, the Ukraine and Turkey, at the cost of certain new annexations or losses, we must not take a single step that might aid the extreme elements in the war parties of the imperialist powers.

IV

The primary task in undertaking more energetic military training, as in the question of combating famine, is that of organisation.

There cannot be any really serious preparation for war unless the food difficulties are overcome, unless the population is properly supplied with bread, unless the strictest order is introduced on the railways, unless truly iron discipline is established among the masses of the working people (and not only at the top). It is in this field that we are most backward.

Guiltiest of all of a complete lack of understanding of this truth are the Left Socialist-Revolutionary and anarchist elements with their screaming about "insurrectionary committees" and their howls of "to arms", etc. Such screams and howls are the quintessence of stupidity and are nothing but pitiful, despicable and disgusting phrase-making; it is ridiculous to talk about "insurrection" and "insurrectionary committees" when Soviet central power is doing its utmost to persuade the people to start military training and arm themselves, when we have more weapons than we can count and distribute, when it is precisely the economic ruin and the lack of discipline that prevent us from using the weapons available and compel us to lose valuable time that could be used for training.

Intensified military training for a serious war cannot be done by means of a sudden impulse, a battle-cry, a militant slogan; it requires lengthy, intense, persistent and disciplined work on a mass scale. We must deal ruthlessly with the Left Socialist-Revolutionary and anarchist elements that do not wish to understand this, and must not give them an opportunity to infect certain elements of our proletarian Communist Party with their hysteria.

V

It is essential to wage a ruthless struggle against the bourgeoisie, which on account of the above circumstances has raised its head during the past few days, and to declare a state of emergency, close newspapers, arrest the leaders and

so on. These measures are as necessary as the military campaign against the rural bourgeoisie, who are holding back grain surpluses and infringing the grain monopoly. There will be no salvation either from the counter-revolution or from famine without iron discipline on the part of the proletariat.

In particular it must be borne in mind that during the past few days the bourgeoisie have been making extremely skilful and cunning use of panic-spreading as a weapon against proletarian power. Some of our comrades, especially those who are less resolute in their attitude to the Left Socialist-Revolutionary and anarchist revolutionary phrases, have allowed themselves to be diverted, have got into a panic or have failed to observe the line that divides legitimate and necessary warning of the coming danger from the spreading of panic.

The basic specific features of the entire present economic and political situation in Russia must be kept firmly in mind; because of these features our cause cannot be helped by outbursts. We must become firmly convinced ourselves and try to convince all workers of the truth that only restraint and patient creative work to establish iron proletarian discipline, including ruthless measures against hooligans, kulaks and disorganising elements, can protect Soviet power at this moment, one of the most difficult and dangerous periods of transition, unavoidable owing to the delay of the revolution in the West.

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REPORT ON FOREIGN POLICY DELIVERED AT A JOINT MEETING OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE MOSCOW SOVIET[143] MAY 14, 1918

Comrades, permit me to acquaint you with the present foreign policy situation. In the past few days our international position has in many respects become more complicated owing to the aggravation of the general situation. Because of this aggravation, the provocation, the deliberate panic-spreading by the bourgeois press and its echo, the socialist press, is again doing its dark and filthy work of repeating the Kornilov affair.

First, I shall draw your attention to the factors determining, in the main, the international position of the Soviet Republic in order to proceed to the outward legal forms determining this position, and, on the basis of this, describe again the difficulties which have arisen or, to be more precise, define the turning-point at which we have arrived and which forms the basis of the worsened political situation.

Comrades, you know, and your knowledge has been particularly reinforced by the experience of the two Russian revolutions, that economic interests and the economic position of the classes which rule our state lie at the root of both our home and foreign policy. These propositions which constitute the basis of the Marxist world outlook and have been confirmed for us Russian revolutionaries by the great experience of both Russian revolutions, must not be forgotten even for a moment if we are to avoid losing ourselves

in the thickets, the labyrinth of diplomatic tricks, a labyrinth which at times is artificially created and made more intricate by people, classes, parties and groups who like to fish in muddy waters, or who are compelled to do so.

We recently experienced, and to a certain extent are experiencing now, a situation in which our counter-revolutionaries—the Constitutional-Democrats and their foremost yes-men, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks—have been attempting to take advantage of the increased complexity of the international situation.

Basically, the position is that the Russian Socialist Soviet Republic, due to economic and political causes which we have described in the press on more than one occasion, and of which you are aware, due to a different rate of development, a basis of development different from that of the West, still remains a lone island in the stormy sea of imperialist robbery. The main economic factor in the West is that this imperialist war which has tortured and exhausted mankind has given rise to such complicated, such acute, such involved conflicts that again and again, at every step, the question of war and peace, the solution of the question to the advantage of one or other grouping, hangs by a thread. We have lived through precisely such a situation in the past few days. The contradictions that have arisen out of the frenzied struggle between the imperialist powers drawn into a war which is the result of the economic conditions of the development of capitalism over a number of decades, have made it impossible for the imperialists themselves to stop this war.

Owing to these contradictions, it has come about that the general alliance of the imperialists of all countries, forming the basis of the economic alliance of capitalism, an alliance whose natural and inevitable aim is to defend capital, which recognises no fatherland, and which has proved in the course of many major and important episodes in world history that capital places the safeguarding of the alliance of the capitalists of all countries against the working people above the interests of the fatherland, of the people or of what you will—that this alliance is not the moving force of politics.

Of course, as before, this alliance remains the main economic trend of the capitalist system, a trend which must ultimately make itself felt with inevitable force. That the imperialist war has divided into hostile groups, into hostile coalitions the imperialist powers which at the present moment, one may say, have divided up the whole world among themselves, is an exception to this main tendency of capitalism. This enmity, this struggle, this death grapple, proves that in certain circumstances the alliance of world imperialism is impossible. We are witnessing a situation in which the stormy waves of imperialist reaction, of the imperialist slaughter of nations, are hurling themselves at the small island of the socialist Soviet Republic, and seem about to sink it any minute, while actually these waves are only breaking against each other.

The basic contradictions between the imperialist powers have led to such a merciless struggle that, while recognising its hopelessness, neither the one, nor the other group is in a position to extricate itself at will from the iron grip of this war. The war has brought out two main contradictions, which in their turn have determined the socialist Soviet Republic's present international position. The first is the battle being waged on the Western front between Germany and Britain, which has reached an extreme degree of ferocity. We have heard on more than one occasion representatives of the two belligerent groups promise and assure their own people and other peoples that all that is required is one more last effort for the enemy to be subdued, the fatherland defended and the interests of civilisation and of the war of liberation saved for all time. The longer this terrible struggle drags on and the deeper the belligerent countries become involved, the further off is the way out of this interminable war. And it is the violence of this conflict that makes extremely difficult, well-nigh impossible, an alliance of the great imperialist powers against the Soviet Republic, which in the bare half-year of Its existence has won the warm regard and the most whole-hearted sympathy of the class-conscious workers of the world.

The second contradiction determining Russia's international position is the rivalry between Japan and America. Over several decades the economic development of these

countries has produced a vast amount of inflammable material which makes inevitable a desperate clash between them for domination of the Pacific Ocean and the surrounding territories. The entire diplomatic and economic history of the Far East leaves no room for doubt that under capitalist conditions it is impossible to avert the imminent conflict between Japan and America. This contradiction, temporarily concealed by the alliance of Japan and America against Germany, delays Japanese imperialism's attack on Russia, which was prepared for over a long period, which was a long time feeling its way, and which to a certain degree was started and is being supported by counter-revolutionary forces. The campaign which has been launched against the Soviet Republic (the landing at Vladivostok and the support of the Semyonov bands) is being held up because it threatens to turn the hidden conflict between Japan and America into open war. It is quite likely, of course, and we must not forget that no matter how solid the imperialist groupings may appear to be, they can be broken up in a few days if the interests of sacred private property, the sacred rights of concessions, etc., demand it. It may well be that the tiniest spark will suffice to blow up the existing alignment of powers, and then the afore-mentioned contradictions will no longer protect us.

At the moment, however, the situation we have described explains why it is possible to preserve our socialist island in the middle of stormy seas and also why its position is so unstable, and, at times, to the great joy of the bourgeoisie and the panic of the petty bourgeoisie, it seems that it may be engulfed by the waves at any minute.

The outer aspect, the external expression of this situation is the Brest Treaty on the one hand, and the customs and laws with regard to neutral countries on the other.

You know that treaties and laws are worth nothing but a scrap of paper in the face of international conflicts.

These words are usually recalled and quoted as an example of the cynicism of imperialist foreign policy; the cynicism, however, lies not in these words, but in the ruthless, the cruelly and agonisingly ruthless, imperialist

war, in which all peace treaties and all laws of neutrality have been flouted, are flouted, and will be flouted, as long as capitalism exists.

That is why, when we come to the most important question for us, the Brest peace and the likelihood of its violation with all the possible consequences for us—if we want to stand firmly on our socialist feet and do not want to be overthrown by the plots and provocations of the counter-revolutionaries, no matter under what socialist labels they disguise themselves, we must not forget for a single moment the economic principles underlying all peace treaties, including that of Brest-Litovsk, the economic principles underlying all neutrality, including our own. We must not forget, on the one hand, the state of affairs internationally, the state of affairs of international imperialism in relation to the class which is growing, and which sooner or later, perhaps even later than we desire or expect, will nevertheless become capitalism's heir and will defeat world capitalism. And on the other hand, we must not forget the relations between the imperialist countries, the relations between the imperialist economic groups.

Having clarified this situation, I think, comrades, we shall not find it difficult to understand the significance of those diplomatic particulars and details, at times even trifles, which have mainly occupied our attention during the past few days, which have been on our minds during the past few days. Clearly, the instability of the international situation gives rise to panic. This panic emanates from the Constitutional-Democrats, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who aid and abet the interests of those who want and who strive to sow panic. In no way closing our eyes to the full danger and tragedy of the situation, and analysing the economic relations on an international scale, we must say: yes, the question of war and peace hangs by a thread both in the West and in the Far East because two trends exist; one, which makes an alliance of all the imperialists inevitable; the other, which places the imperialists in opposition to each other—two trends, neither of which has any firm foundation. No, Japan cannot now decide to launch a full-scale attack, although with her million-strong army she could quite easily overrun

obviously weak Russia. I do not know, nor can anyone know, when this is likely to take place.

The form of the ultimatum threatens war against the allies and a treaty with Germany, but this position can change in a few days. There is always the possibility of it changing, because the American bourgeoisie, now at loggerheads with Japan, can tomorrow come to terms with her, because the Japanese bourgeoisie are just as likely tomorrow to come to terms with the German bourgeoisie. Their basic interests are the same: the division of the world between themselves, the interests of the landowners, of capital, the safeguarding (as they say) of their national self-respect and their national interests. This language is sufficiently familiar to those who have either the misfortune or the habit—I don't know which—of reading newspapers like those of the Socialist-Revolutionaries. And when national self-respect begins to be mentioned frequently we all know, we know very well from the experience of 1914, what facts of imperialist robbery this is prompted by. In view of this relationship it is clear why the situation in the Far East is unstable. One thing must be said: we must have a clear understanding of these contradictions of capitalist interests, we must appreciate that the stability of the Soviet Republic is growing with every week, every month that passes, and that sympathy towards it among the working and exploited people of the world is growing at the same time.

And, at the same time, any day, any moment we must be prepared for and expect changes in international politics in favour of the policies of the extremist war parties.

The position of the German coalition is clear to us. At the present moment the majority of the German bourgeois parties stand for observing the Brest peace, but, of course, are very glad to "improve" on it and to receive a few more annexations at Russia's expense. What makes them take this stand? The political and military considerations of German national interests—as they express it—of imperialist interests, make them prefer peace in the East, so that their hands may be free in the West, where German imperialism has promised an immediate victory on many occasions, and where every week or every month proves that this victory, the more the partial successes gained, recedes still further

into the distance. On the other hand, there is a war party which, during discussions on the Brest Treaty, showed its hand on a number of occasions, a party which naturally exists in all imperialist countries, a war party which says to itself: force must be used immediately, irrespective of possible consequences. These are the voices of the extremist war party. It has been known in German history since the time when overwhelming military victories became a feature history. It has been known since 1866, for instance, when the extremist war party of Germany achieved victory over Austria and turned this victory into a complete rout. All these clashes, all these conflicts are inevitable and lead to a situation where matters now hang by a thread, where, on the one hand, the bourgeois imperialist majority of the German parliament, the German propertied classes, the German capitalists prefer to stand by the Brest Treaty, while having, I repeat, no hesitation about improving on it. And on the other hand, any day, any moment we must be prepared for and expect changes in politics in the interests of the extremist war party.

This explains the instability of the international situation; this explains how easy it is in the circumstances to put the Party in one situation or another; this shows what prudence, caution, self-control and presence of mind is demanded of the Soviet government if it is to define its task clearly. Let the Russian bourgeoisie rush from a French to a German orientation. They like doing this. They have in several areas seen that German support is an excellent guarantee against the peasants who are taking the land, and against the workers who are building the foundations of socialism. In the quite recent past, and over a long period, over a number of years they branded as traitors those who condemned the imperialist war and opened people's eyes to its real nature, but now they are all prepared in a few weeks to change their political beliefs and to go over from an alliance with the British robbers to an alliance with the German robbers against Soviet power. Let the bourgeoisie of all shades, from the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, rush this way and that. It suits their nature. Let them spread panic, for they are themselves in a panic. Let them rush to

and fro, unable to do otherwise, vacillating between the different orientations and between the absurd phrases that fail to take into consideration the fact that to deepen the effect of the revolution, when it has attained great proportions, one has to experience the most diverse groupings and transitions from one stage to another. We Russian revolutionaries have had the good fortune in the twentieth century to pass through two revolutions, each of which gave us a lot of experience, which has also stamped its impression on the lives of the people, of how a deep-going and effective revolutionary movement is prepared; how the different classes in this movement behave; by what difficult and exhausting path, sometimes by a long evolution, the maturity of new classes comes about.

Remember how hard it was for the Soviets, created by the spontaneous outburst in 1905, how hard it was for them in 1917 to take up the fight again, and how hard later, when they had to go through all the suffering of compromise with the bourgeoisie and with the hidden, most rabid enemies of the working class, who talked of the defence of the revolution, of the Red Flag, and committed the greatest of crimes in June 1917—now, when the majority of the working class supports us, remember what it cost after the great 1905 Revolution to emerge with Soviets of the working and peasant classes. Remember all this, and think of the mass scale on which the struggle against international imperialism is developing, think how difficult the transition to this situation is, and what the Russian Republic had to undergo when it found itself ahead of all the other contingents of the socialist army.

I know that there are, of course, wiseacres with a high opinion of themselves and even calling themselves socialists, who assert that power should not have been taken until the revolution broke out in all countries. They do not realise that in saying this they are deserting the revolution and going over to the side of the bourgeoisie. To wait until the working classes carry out a revolution on an international scale means that everyone will remain suspended in mid-air. This is senseless. Everyone knows the difficulties of a revolution. It may begin with brilliant success in one country and then go through agonising periods, since

final victory is only possible on a world scale, and only by the joint efforts of the workers of all countries. Our task consists in being restrained and prudent, we must manoeuvre and retreat until we receive reinforcements. A change-over to these tactics is inevitable, no matter how much they are mocked by so-called revolutionaries with no idea of what revolution means.

Having dealt with the general questions I now want to examine the causes of the recent alarm and panic which have again enabled the counter-revolutionaries to start activities intended to undermine Soviet power.

I have already mentioned that the outward legal form and outer aspect of all international relations of the Soviet Socialist Republic are, on the one hand, the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, and, on the other, the general law and custom defining the status of a neutral country among other, belligerent countries; this status accounts for the recent difficulties. The conclusion of peace with Finland, the Ukraine and Turkey should have been the natural consequence of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, yet we are still at war with these countries, and this is not due to our internal development, but to the influence of the ruling classes of these countries. In these conditions the only temporary way out lay in the temporary breathing-space provided by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the breathing-space which provoked so many futile and unnecessary words about its being impossible but which nevertheless turned out to be possible and in two months brought results, made itself felt on the majority of Russian soldiers, enabled them to return home and see how things were going, to take advantage of the revolution's gains, to work the land, to look around and draw new strength for the fresh sacrifices ahead.

Naturally, this temporary breathing-space appeared to be coming to an end when the situation worsened in Finland, the Ukraine and Turkey, when, instead of peace, we merely obtained a postponement of that selfsame acute economic problem: war or peace? And now are we to go to war once again, despite all the peaceful intentions of Soviet power and its absolute determination to sacrifice so-called Great Power status, i.e., the right to conclude secret treaties, to conceal them from the people with the assistance

of the Chernovs, Tseretelis and Kerenskys, to sign secret predatory treaties and conduct an imperialist, predatory war? Indeed, instead of peace, all that we have obtained is a brief postponement of that selfsame pressing question of war or peace.

Here is the result of this situation, and you again clearly see where its final outcome lies—namely, in the question of what the results will be of the wavering among the two hostile groups of imperialist countries—the American conflict in the Far East, and the German-British conflict in Western Europe. It is clear how these contradictions have intensified over the conquest of the Ukraine, over the situation which the German imperialists, particularly their main war party, frequently viewed so optimistically, looked upon as so easy, and which caused precisely this extremist German war party such fantastic difficulties. It was this situation which temporarily raised the hopes of the Russian Constitutional-Democrats, Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, who have fallen in love with what Skoropadsky is bringing the Ukraine, and who now hope that this will also be easily achieved in Russia. These gentlemen will be mistaken; their hopes will turn to dust because ... (*stormy applause*), because, I say, that same main war party in Germany, which is too accustomed to rely on the power of the sword, even this party in these particular circumstances has not been supported by the majority of the imperialists, those bourgeois imperialist circles who have seen unprecedented difficulties in the conquest of the Ukraine, in the struggle to subjugate a whole people, in the forced necessity of resorting to a terrible coup d'état.

This main war party created unprecedented difficulties in Germany when, having promised its people and the workers supreme victories on the Western Front, this extremist war party was forced to recognise that it was faced with new, unbelievable economic and political difficulties, with having to divert military forces to tasks which also at first seemed easy, and also with having to conclude a treaty with the Ukrainian Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were the signatories to the peace treaty.

The extremist war party in Germany reasoned: we shall send many troops and obtain grain, but then it became neces-

sary to engineer a coup d'état. That turned out to be easy, because the Ukrainian Mensheviks readily supported this move. But it then turned out that this coup d'état created fresh and gigantic difficulties, because the grain and raw materials, without which Germany cannot exist, had to be fought for at every step, and their appropriation by military force in an occupied country involved too great an effort and too many sacrifices.

Such is the situation that has arisen in the Ukraine and that should have lent wings to the hopes of the Russian counter-revolution. It is clear that in this struggle, Russia, which has been unable to rebuild her army, has suffered and is suffering further losses. The peace talks have led to new, onerous conditions, to new open and concealed indemnities. Under what decree the Ukraine's frontiers are to be determined is not clear. The Rada,[144] which signed the decree, has been removed. A landowner-hetman has been put in its place. Because of this uncertainty a whole number of problems have emerged which prove that the questions of war and peace remain as before. The partial armistice existing between the Russian and German troops in no way predetermines the general situation. The question hangs in the air. The same is true of Georgia, where we have a protracted counter-revolutionary struggle by the government of the Caucasian Mensheviks, a protracted struggle by counter-revolutionaries who call themselves Social-Democrats. And when the victory of Soviet power and the working people, having embraced the whole of Russia, has begun to draw in the non-Russian outlying areas, when it has become quite obvious and beyond all doubt that the victory of Soviet power, as has been admitted by the counter-revolutionary representatives of the Don Cossacks, cannot be delayed, when the Menshevik government in the Caucasus has begun to waver the government of Gegechkori and Jordania, who realised this too late and started to talk about finding a common language with the Bolsheviks when Tsereteli, aided by the Turkish troops, has shown his hand by advancing against the Bolsheviks—they will reap the same harvest as the Rada. (*Applause.*)

Remember, however, that if these bargainers of the Caucasian Rada receive the support of the German troops,

as did the Ukrainian Rada, then there will no doubt be fresh difficulties for the Russian Soviet Republic, a new inevitability of war, new dangers and now uncertainties. There are people who refer to this uncertainty, to the strain of an uncertain situation (in fact such an uncertain situation is sometimes worse than any clearly defined one), and say that the uncertainty can be easily removed—you only have to demand openly that the Germans observe the Brest Treaty.

I have heard such naïve people, who consider themselves to be on the left, but who in fact only reflect the narrow-mindedness of our petty bourgeoisie....*

They forget that you have first to be victorious before you can make demands. If you are not victorious the enemy can delay his reply or even make no reply at all to your demands. That is the law of imperialist war.

You don't like it. Then be able to defend your homeland. The worker has every right to defend his homeland for the sake of socialism, for the sake of the working class.

I shall only add that this uncertain situation on the Caucasian border was a result of the quite unpardonable vacillation of the Gegechkori government which at first announced that it did not recognise the Brest peace, and then declared its independence without informing us of what territory this independence covered. We have sent innumerable radio-telegrams saying to them, please inform us of the territory you lay claim to. You have the right to claim independence, but since you speak of independence, you are bound to say what territory you are representing. That was a week ago. Countless radio-telegrams have been dispatched, but not a single reply has been received. German imperialism is taking advantage of this. This has made it possible for Germany, and Turkey, as a satellite state, to push farther and farther forward, making no replies, ignoring everything, stating: we shall take whatever we can, we are not infringing the Brest peace, because the Transcaucasian army does not recognise it, because the Caucasus is independent.

Of whom is the Gegechkori government independent? It is independent of the Soviet Republic, but it is dependent,

* A phrase that is not clearly written in the verbatim report has been omitted.—*Ed.*

just a little, on German imperialism, and quite naturally so. (*Applause.*)

That is the situation which has developed, comrades—an acute aggravation of relations in the last few days—it is a situation which has once again, and fairly obviously, confirmed the correctness of the tactics which the vast majority of our Party, the Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks, has employed and firmly insisted on during recent months.

We possess great revolutionary experience, which has taught us that it is essential to employ the tactics of merciless attack when objective conditions permit, when the experience of compromising has shown that the people's indignation has been aroused, and that attack will express this change. But we have to resort to temporising tactics, to a slow gathering of forces when objective circumstances do not favour a call for a general merciless repulse.

Any person who does not shut his eyes to the facts, who is not blind, knows that we are merely repeating what we have said earlier, and what we have always said: that we do not forget the weakness of the Russian working class compared to other contingents of the international proletariat. It was not our own will, but historical circumstances, the legacy of the tsarist regime, the flabbiness of the Russian bourgeoisie, that caused this contingent to march ahead of the other contingents of the international proletariat; it was not because we desired it, but because circumstances demanded it. We must remain at our post until the arrival of our ally, the international proletariat, which will arrive and will inevitably arrive, but which is approaching at an immeasurably slower pace than we expect or wish. If we see that as a result of objective conditions the international proletariat moves too slowly, we must nevertheless stick to our tactics of temporising and utilising the conflicts and contradictions between the imperialists, of slowly accumulating strength; the tactics of preserving this island of Soviet power in the stormy imperialist sea, maintaining this island which now already attracts the gaze of the working people of all countries. That is why we tell ourselves that, if the extremist war party can at any moment defeat any imperialist coalition and build

a new unexpected imperialist coalition against us, we at any rate will not make it any easier for them. And if they come against us—yes, we are now defencists—we shall do everything in our power, everything within the power of diplomatic tactics, we shall do everything to delay that moment, everything to make the brief and unstable respite, given us in March, last longer, for we are firmly convinced that behind us are tens of millions of workers and peasants who know that with every week and, even more so, with every month of this respite they gain new strength, they are consolidating Soviet power, making it firm and stable. They know that they are introducing a new spirit, and that after the attrition and weariness of this exhausting reactionary war, they will create firmness and readiness for the last and decisive battle should external forces attack the Socialist Soviet Republic.

We have been defencists since October 25, 1917; we have won the right to defend our native land. It is not secret treaties that we are defending, we have annulled and exposed them to the whole world. We are defending our country against the imperialists. We are defending and we shall win. It is not the Great Power status of Russia that we are defending—of that nothing is left but Russia proper—nor is it national interests, for we assert that the interests of socialism, of world socialism are higher than national interests, higher than the interests of the state. We are defenders of the socialist fatherland.

This is not achieved by issuing declarations, but only by overthrowing the bourgeoisie in one's own country, by a ruthless war to the death begun in one's own country; and we know that we shall win this war. Ours is a small island in the war that engulfs the imperialist world, but on this small island we have shown and proved to all what the working class can do. Everyone knows this and has acknowledged it. We have proved that we possess the right to defend our homeland. We are defencists and look upon our task with all the seriousness taught us by the four years of war, with all the seriousness and caution understood by every worker and peasant who has met a soldier and has learned what that soldier has lived through in these four years of war—the caution which may not be understood, which may

be sneered at and regarded frivolously only by people who are revolutionaries in word but not in deed. It is just because we do support the defence of the fatherland that we tell ourselves: a firm and strong army and a strong rear are needed for the defence, and in order to have a firm and strong army we must in the first place ensure that the food supplies are on a sound basis. For this the dictatorship of the proletariat must be expressed not only centrally—that is the first step and only the first step—but there must be dictatorship throughout the whole of Russia—that is the second step and only the second step, which we have not yet carried out sufficiently. Proletarian discipline is essential and necessary for us; real proletarian dictatorship, when the firm and iron rule of class-conscious workers is felt in every remote corner of our country, when not a single kulak, not a single rich man, not a single opponent of the grain monopoly remains unpunished, but is found and punished by the iron hand of the disciplined dictators of the working class, the proletarian dictators. (*Applause.*)

We say to ourselves: our attitude to defence of the fatherland is a cautious one; it is our duty to do everything that our diplomacy can do to delay the moment of war, to extend the respite period; we promise the workers and peasants to do all we can for peace. This we shall do. And bourgeois gentlemen and their hirelings, who think that just as in the Ukraine, where a coup was brought about so easily, so in Russia it may be possible to give birth to new Skoropadskys, should not forget that the war party in Germany found it very difficult to effect a coup in the Ukraine, and will meet with plenty of opposition in Soviet Russia. Everything goes to prove this; Soviet power has pursued this line and has made every sacrifice to consolidate the position of the working people.

The situation with regard to peace with Finland may be summed up in the words: Fort Ino and Murmansk. Fort Ino, which defends Petrograd, lies geographically within the Finnish state. In concluding peace with the workers' government of Finland we, the representatives of socialist Russia, recognised Finland's absolute right to the whole territory, but it was mutually agreed by both governments that Fort Ino should remain in Russia's hands "for the

defence of the joint interests of the Socialist Republics", as stated in the treaty that was concluded.[145] It is natural that our troops should conclude this peace in Finland, should sign these terms. It is natural that bourgeois and counter-revolutionary Finland was bound to raise a hue and cry against this. It is natural that the reactionary and counter-revolutionary Finnish bourgeoisie should lay claim to this stronghold. It is natural that, because of this, the issue should become acute on a number of occasions and should still remain acute. Matters hang by a thread. It is natural that the question of Murmansk, to which the Anglo-French have laid claim, should give rise to even greater aggravation, because they have spent tens of millions on the port's construction in order to safeguard their military rear in their imperialist war against Germany. Their respect for neutrality is so wonderful that they make use of everything that is left unguarded. Furthermore, sufficient excuse for their grabbing is their possession of a battleship, while we have nothing with which to chase it away. It is natural that all this should have aggravated the situation. There is an outer aspect, a legal expression resulting from the international position of the Soviet Republic, which presumes that it is impossible for armed forces of any belligerent state to set foot on neutral territory without being disarmed. The British landed their military forces at Murmansk, and we were unable to prevent this by armed force. Consequently, we are presented with demands almost in the nature of an ultimatum: if you cannot protect your neutrality, we shall wage war on your territory.

A worker-peasant army, however, has now been formed, it has rallied in the uyezds and gubernias the peasants who have returned to their land, land wrested from the landowners; they now have something to defend. An army has been formed which has started to build Soviet power, and which will become the vanguard if an invasion against Russia breaks out; we shall rise as one man to meet the enemy.

My time is up, and I want to conclude by reading a telegram received by radio from Comrade Joffe, Soviet Ambassador in Berlin. This telegram will show you that, on the one hand, you have confirmation from our Ambassador

of whether my analysis of the international situation is correct and, on the other hand, that the foreign policy of our Soviet Republic is a responsible one—it is a policy of preparation for defence of our country, a steadfast policy, not allowing a single step to be taken that would aid the extremist parties of the imperialist powers in the East and West. This is a responsible policy with no illusions. There always remains the possibility that any day military forces may be thrown against us and we, the workers and peasants, assure ourselves and the whole world, and shall be able to prove, that we shall rise to a man to defend the Soviet Republic. I hope, therefore, that the reading of this telegram will serve as an appropriate conclusion to my speech and will show us the spirit in which the representatives of the Soviet Republic work abroad in the interests of the Soviets, of all Soviet institutions and the Soviet Republic.

"The latest radio-telegrams received today report that the German War Prisoners' Commission is leaving on Friday, May 10. We have already received a Note from the German Government proposing the setting up of a special commission to consider all legal questions in regard to our possessions in the Ukraine and in Finland. I have agreed to such a commission and have asked you to send the appropriate military and legal representatives. Today I had a talk about further advances, demands for clearing Fort Ino, and the attitude of the Russians to Germany. Here is the reply: The German High Command states that there will be no further advances; Germany's role in the Ukraine and Finland has ended. Germany is willing to assist our peace talks with Kiev and Helsingfors and is entering into negotiations with the governments concerned. As regards Fort Ino, in connection with the Finnish Peace talks: according to the treaty, the forts should be destroyed. Germany considers that when defining the frontiers the agreement with the Reds can be accepted; the Whites have not yet replied. The German Government declares officially: Germany abides firmly by the Brest Treaty, she wants peaceful relations with us, she has no aggressive plans and has no intention of attacking us in any way. It is promised that, in accordance with my request, Russian citizens in Germany will be treated on a par with other neutrals."

Newspaper report published in *Pravda* Nos. 93 and 94, May 15 and 16, 1918; in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 95 May 15, 1918

Published according to the text of the book: *Minutes of the Sessions of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, 4th Convocation. Verbatim Report*, Moscow, 1920, collated with the text of the newspaper *Petrogradskaya Pravda* No. 101 May 19, 1918

REPORT ON THE CURRENT SITUATION TO THE MOSCOW REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE R.C.P.(B.)[146] MAY 15, 1918

BRIEF NEWSPAPER REPORT

Lenin dealt first with the views of the "Lefts" on foreign policy and pointed out the tremendous propaganda value of the Brest negotiations, for the Western proletariat had been able to learn a lot, and to understand who the Bolsheviks were, and what the situation here was after the revolution, etc. Salvation now lay not in an open rupture of the Brest Treaty but in the ability to manoeuvre in the complex international situations that arose from the conflicting interests of the various imperialist countries. One had to take into account the relations between Japan and America, Germany and Britain, the dissension in the German capitalist and war parties, and so on. The need in internal politics was for proletarian discipline, a struggle against the kulaks in the villages, the campaign for grain, a complete food dictatorship and dictatorship of the working class. Replying to the "Lefts" on the question of state capitalism, Lenin explained that this held no terrors for us because in the agonising period of transition from capitalism to socialism that we had been going through the main thing was to save industry, and production could be got going and an exact account kept of production and consumption only by means of the large-scale organisation that was possible at present only under state capitalism. An essential condition for this was workers' control. As an example Lenin mentioned the tanners, their sound organisation, and the workers' control in private enterprises.

Pravda No. 95, May 17, 1918

Published according to the *Pravda* text

REPORT TO THE ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF FINANCIAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOVIETS[147] MAY 18, 1918

The country's financial situation is critical. The problem of transforming the country on socialist lines offers many difficulties that at times appear insurmountable, but no matter how arduous the work that at every step meets with the resistance of the petty-bourgeoisie, the profiteers and propertied classes, I think we shall have to carry it out.

You experienced, practical people know better than anybody what difficulties have to be overcome in advancing from general assumptions and decrees to daily practice. We have tremendous work ahead of us, because the propertied classes will put up a desperate resistance, but the more difficult the task, the greater the benefits when we have conquered the bourgeoisie and subordinated them to the control of the Soviet authorities. Our tasks are such that it is worth while working and fighting the last decisive battle against the bourgeoisie, for the success of the socialist reform of the country depends on the fulfilment of those tasks.

The basic tasks presented by the Soviet government in the field of finance must be immediately put into effect, and this meeting we are holding with you will help towards ensuring that our planned reforms do not remain mere declarations.

We must effect sound financial reforms at all costs, and we must remember that any radical reforms will be doomed to failure unless our financial policy is successful.

In the name of the Council of People's Commissars I draw your attention to the tasks that have come to the fore

at a large number of meetings and ask you to work out the details of their practical application. The tasks are the following.

CENTRALISATION OF FINANCES

The centralisation of finances and the concentration of our forces are essential; unless these principles are applied in practice we shall be unable to carry out the economic reforms that will provide every citizen with enough to eat and the possibility of satisfying his cultural needs.

The need for centralisation is now reaching the consciousness of the masses; this change is taking place slowly and for this reason it will be more extensive and more profound; an urge towards decentralisation is to be observed, but it is a disease of the transitional period, a disease due to growth, and is quite natural because the centralism of the tsar and the bourgeoisie engendered hatred of and disgust at all centralised authority among the masses.

I regard centralism as the means of providing a subsistence minimum for the working people. I am in favour of the broadest autonomy for local Soviet organisations but at the same time I believe that if our work of consciously transforming the country is to be fruitful, there must be a single, strictly defined financial policy, and that instructions must be carried out from top to bottom.

From you we expect a decree on the centralisation of the country's finances.

INCOME AND PROPERTY TAXATION

The second task confronting us is the correct organisation of a progressive income and property tax. You know that all socialists are against indirect taxation because the only correct tax from the socialist point of view is the progressive income and property tax. I will not conceal the fact that we shall meet with tremendous difficulty in introducing this tax—the propertied classes will put up a desperate resistance.

The bourgeoisie are today evading taxation by bribery and through their connections; we must close all loopholes. We have many plans in this sphere and have cleared the

ground on which to build the foundation, but the actual foundation of that building has not yet been built. The time for this has now come.

Decrees alone will be insufficient to put the income tax into effect; practical methods and experience will be needed.

We assume that we shall have to go over to the monthly collection of the income tax. The section of the population receiving its income from the state-treasury is increasing, and measures must be taken to collect the income tax from these people by stopping it out of their wages.

All income and earnings, without exception, must be subject to income tax; the work of the printing press that has so far been practised may be justified as a temporary measure, but it must give place to a progressive income and property tax that is collected at very frequent intervals.

I should like to ask you to work out this measure in detail and draw up practical and precise plans that can be incorporated in decrees and instructions in the shortest time.

On the question of indemnities, Lenin said:

I am not against indemnities in general; the proletariat could not destroy the bourgeoisie without resorting to indemnities; it was a correct measure in the period of transition, but now that period is past and the taxation of the propertied classes must be replaced by a single, centralised state tax.

There is no doubt that the bourgeoisie will try with every means in their power to evade our laws and indulge in petty frauds. We shall struggle against that and in the end we shall defeat what is left of the bourgeoisie.

LABOUR CONSCRIPTION

The third aim of our financial policy is the introduction of labour conscription and the registration of the propertied classes.

The old capitalism, based on free competition, has been completely killed by the war—it has given way to state, monopolised capitalism. Because of the war, the advanced countries of Western Europe, Britain and Germany, have introduced strict accounting for, and control of, all

production; they have introduced labour conscription for the propertyless classes but have left many loopholes open for the bourgeoisie. We must apply the experience of these countries, but must introduce labour conscription primarily for the propertied classes who have grown rich on the war, and not for the poor people who have already made more than enough sacrifices on the altar of war.

The time has come to introduce labour taxation—budget books primarily for the bourgeoisie so that it will be possible to see what amount of work each of them devotes to the country. Control must be maintained by the local Soviets. This measure is at present quite superfluous as far as the poor are concerned since they already have to work enough; furthermore, the trade unions will adopt all the necessary measures to increase labour productivity and introduce labour discipline.

The registration of all propertied people and a law compelling rich people to have work, taxation and budget books—this is something we have to settle immediately. It must be worked out practically and concretely and is a measure that will enable us to place the burden of taxation on the rich, which is only just.

NEW CURRENCY

The fourth task of the moment is the substitution of new currency for the old. Money, banknotes—everything that is called money today—these titles to social well-being, have a disruptive effect and are dangerous in so far as the bourgeoisie, by hoarding these banknotes, retain economic power.

To reduce this effect we must undertake the strict registration of all banknotes in circulation in order to change all old currency for new. It is beyond all doubt that in putting this measure into effect we shall come up against terrific economic and political difficulties; the preparatory work must be thorough—several thousand millions in the new money must be ready; in every volost, in every block of every large town, we must have savings banks, but these difficulties will not make us hesitate. We shall announce a very short period in which everyone must declare the amount

of money he possesses and obtain new currency for it; if the sum is a small one he will get ruble for ruble; if it is above the established limit he will get only part of it. This is a measure that will undoubtedly meet with counteraction, not only on the part of the bourgeoisie, but also on the part of the kulaks in the countryside who have been growing rich on the war and burying thousands of banknotes in bottles. We shall come face to face with the class enemy. It will be an arduous but rewarding struggle. Among us there is no doubt as to whether we have to take upon ourselves the full burden of this struggle, since it is necessary and inevitable. Tremendous preparatory work will be necessary to effect this measure; we must draw up a type of declaratory leaflet, we must develop propaganda in the localities, fix a time for the exchange of old money for new, etc. We shall, however, do it. It will be the last decisive battle with the bourgeoisie and will enable us to pay temporary tribute to foreign capital—until the hour of the social revolution strikes in the West—and carry out the necessary reforms in the country.

In conclusion Lenin, speaking in the name of the Council of People's Commissars, wished the Congress success in its work. (*Lenin's speech was interrupted more than once by enthusiastic applause.*)

Newspaper report published in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 99, May 19, 1918

Published according to the text of the book: *Report on the Work of the First All-Russia Congress of Representatives of the Financial Departments of Regional, Gubernia, and Uyezd Soviets*, Moscow, 1918

LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE CONFERENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF ENTERPRISES TO BE NATIONALISED[148] MAY 18, 1918

Having heard the statement made by the comrades elected as the workers' delegation at the conference of representatives of large metalworks, and bearing in mind the resolution adopted by the conference, I am able to say that in my opinion the Council of People's Commissars will certainly be unanimously *in favour* of immediate nationalisation if the conference exerts every effort to secure planned and systematic organisation of work and increased productivity.

Hence, it is desirable that the conference: 1) Should immediately elect a Provisional Council to prepare for the amalgamation of the works; 2) Should authorise the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union, in agreement with the Supreme Economic Council, to change the form of and to add members to this Provisional Council for the purpose of transforming it into a *Management Board* of a single union (or amalgamation) of all the nationalised works; 3) Should approve, or by means of a resolution legalise, the factory regulations on the model of the Bryansk regulations,[149] for the purpose of creating strict labour discipline; 4) Should nominate candidates from among specialists, engineers and organisers of large-scale production, for the purpose of participating in the management, or authorise the Supreme Economic Council to seek for and appoint such; 5) It is desirable that workers from the best organised works, or those having most experience in managing large-scale production, shall be sent by the

Provisional Council or by the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union) to assist in organising affairs properly at the less successful works; 6) By keeping the strictest account and control of all materials with reference to the productivity of labour, we must achieve, and we can achieve, enormous economies in raw materials and labour.

I think that if the conference and the bodies it sets up work energetically, it will be possible for the Council of People's Commissars to pass the nationalisation decree *within the next few days.*

Izvestia VTsIK No. 99,
May 19, 1918

Published according to
the *Izvestia* text

DRAFT OF A TELEGRAM TO THE PETROGRAD WORKERS[150] MAY 21, 1918

The Soviet system can be upheld, the victory of the toilers and exploited *over* the landowners and capitalists can be upheld and consolidated only by the stern, iron rule of the class-conscious workers. Only such a system can attract and rally around it all the toiling people, all the poor.

Comrades, workers, remember that the revolution is in a critical situation! Remember that *you alone* can save the revolution, nobody else can.

What we need is tens of thousands of picked, politically advanced workers, loyal to the cause of socialism, incapable of succumbing to bribery and the temptations of pilfering, and capable of creating an iron force against the kulaks, profiteers, racketeers, bribe-takers and disorganisers.

That is what we urgently and insistently need.

Failing that, famine, unemployment and the destruction of the revolution are inevitable.

The strength of the workers and their salvation lie in organisation. Everybody knows that. Today what we need is a special kind of organisation of the workers, the organisation of the iron rule of the workers in order to vanquish the bourgeoisie. Comrades, workers, the cause of the revolution, the salvation of the revolution, is in your hands!

Time is short: an intolerably difficult May will be followed by an even more difficult June and July, and perhaps even part of August.

Petrogradskaya Pravda No. 103
May 22, 1918

Published according to the manuscript

ON THE FAMINE

A LETTER TO THE WORKERS OF PETROGRAD[151]

Comrades, the other day your delegate, a Party comrade, a worker in the Putilov Works, called on me. This comrade drew a detailed and extremely harrowing picture of the famine in Petrograd. We all know that the food situation is just as acute in many of the industrial gubernias, that famine is knocking just as cruelly at the door of the workers and the poor generally.

And side by side with this we observe an orgy of profiteering in grain and other food products. The famine is not due to the fact that there is no grain in Russia, but to the fact that the bourgeoisie and the rich generally are putting up a last decisive fight against the rule of the toilers, against the state of the workers, against Soviet power, on this most important and acute of issues, the issue of bread. The bourgeoisie and the rich generally, including the rural rich, the kulaks, are thwarting the grain monopoly; they are disrupting the distribution of grain undertaken by the state for the purpose and in the interests of supplying bread to the whole of the population, and in the first place to the workers, the toilers, the needy. The bourgeoisie are disrupting the fixed prices, they are profiteering in grain, they are making a hundred, two hundred and more rubles' profit on every pood of grain; they are disrupting the grain monopoly and the proper distribution of grain by resorting to bribery and corruption and by deliberately supporting everything tending to destroy the power of the workers, which is endeavouring to put into effect the prime, basic and root principle of socialism: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

"He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—every toiler understands that. Every worker, every poor and even middle peasant, everybody who has suffered need in his lifetime, everybody who has ever lived by his own labour, is in agreement with this. Nine-tenths of the population of Russia are in agreement with this truth. In this simple, elementary and perfectly obvious truth lies the basis of socialism, the indefeasible source of it's strength, the indestructible pledge of its final victory.

But the whole point is that it is one thing to subscribe to this truth, to swear one's allegiance to it, to give it verbal recognition, but it is quite different to be able to put it into effect. When hundreds of thousands and millions of people are suffering the pangs of hunger (in Petrograd, in the non-agricultural gubernias, and in Moscow) in a country where millions upon millions of poods of grain are being concealed by the rich, the kulaks, and the profiteers—in a country which calls itself a socialist Soviet Republic—there is something to which every conscious worker and peasant must give serious and profound thought.

"He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—how is this to be put into effect? It is as clear as daylight that in order to put it into effect we require, first, a state grain monopoly, i.e., the absolute prohibition of all private trade in grain, the compulsory delivery of all surplus grain to the state at a fixed price, the absolute prohibition of all hoarding and concealment of surplus grain, no matter by whom. Secondly, we require the strictest registration of all grain surpluses, faultless organisation of the transportation of grain from places of abundance to places of shortage, and the building up of reserves for consumption, for processing, and for seed. Thirdly, we require a just and proper distribution of bread, controlled by the workers' state, the proletarian state, among all the citizens of the state, a distribution which will permit of no privileges and advantages for the rich.

One has only to reflect ever so slightly on these conditions for coping with the famine to see the abysmal stupidity of the contemptible anarchist windbags, who deny the necessity of a state power (and, what is more, a power ruthless in its severity towards the bourgeoisie and ruthlessly firm

towards disorganisers of government) for the transition from capitalism to communism and for the ridding of the working people of all forms of oppression and exploitation. It is at this moment, when our revolution has directly, concretely, and practically approached the tasks involved in the realisation of socialism—and therein lies its inestimable merit—it is at this moment, and exactly in connection with this most important of issues, the issue of bread, that the need becomes absolutely clear for an iron revolutionary rule, for a dictatorship of the proletariat, for the organisation of the collection of food products, their transportation, and distribution on a mass, national scale, taking into account the requirements of tens and hundreds of millions of people, calculating the conditions and the results of production for a year and many years ahead (for there are sometimes years of crop failure, sometimes land improvements essential for increasing grain crops require years of work, and so forth).

Romanov and Kerensky left to the working class a country utterly impoverished by their predatory, criminal, and most terrible war, a country picked clean by Russian and foreign imperialists. Bread will suffice for all only if we keep the strictest account of every pood, only if every pound is distributed absolutely evenly. There is also an acute shortage of bread for machines, i.e., fuel; the railways and factories will come to a standstill, unemployment and famine will bring ruin on the whole nation, if we do not bend every effort to establish a strict and ruthless economy of consumption and proper distribution. We are faced by disaster, it is very near. An intolerably difficult May will be followed by a still more difficult June, July and August.

Our state grain monopoly exists in law, but in practice it is being thwarted at every step by the bourgeoisie: The rural rich, the kulak, the parasite who has been robbing the whole neighbourhood for decades, prefers to enrich himself by profiteering and illicit distilling: it is so good for his pocket, and he can throw the blame for the famine on Soviet power. That, too, is the line of the political defenders of the kulak—the Constitutional-Democrats, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the Mensheviks—who are overtly and covertly "working" against the grain monopoly

FROM MARX TO MAO
NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

and against Soviet power. The party of the spineless, i.e., the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, are displaying their spinelessness here too: they are yielding to the covetous howls and outcries of the bourgeoisie, they are crying out against the grain monopoly, they are "protesting" against the food dictatorship, they are allowing themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie, they are afraid to fight the kulak, and are flapping about hysterically, recommending that the fixed prices be raised, that private trading be permitted, and so forth.

This party of the spineless reflects in politics something akin to what takes place in ordinary life when the kulak incites the poor peasants against the Soviets, bribes them by, say, letting some poor peasant have a pood of grain not for six, but for three rubles, so that the poor peasant, thus corrupted, may himself "make a bit" by profiteering, may "turn a penny" by selling that pood of grain at a profiteering price of one hundred and fifty rubles, and himself become a decrier of the Soviets, which have prohibited private trading in grain.

Anyone who is capable of reflecting, anyone who is willing to reflect ever so little, will see clearly what line this fight has taken.

Either the advanced and class-conscious workers triumph and unite the poor peasant masses around themselves, establish rigorous order, a mercilessly severe rule, a genuine dictatorship of the proletariat—either they compel the kulak to submit, and institute a proper distribution of food and fuel on a national scale;

—or the bourgeoisie, with the help of the kulaks, and with the indirect support of the spineless and muddle-headed (the anarchists and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries), will overthrow Soviet power and set up a Russo-German or a Russo-Japanese Kornilov, who will present the people with a sixteen-hour working day, an ounce of bread per weak, mass shooting of workers and torture in dungeons, as has been the case in Finland and the Ukraine.

Either—or.

There is no middle course.

The situation of the country is desperate in the extreme.

Anyone who reflects upon political life cannot fail to see that the Constitutional-Democrats, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the Mensheviks are coming to an understanding about who would be "pleasanter", a Russo-German or a Russo-Japanese Kornilov, about who would crush the revolution more effectively and reliably, a crowned or a republican Kornilov.

It is time all class-conscious and advanced workers came to an understanding. It is time they bestirred themselves and realised that every minute's delay may spell ruin to the country and ruin to the revolution.

Half-measures will be of no avail. Complaining will lead us nowhere. Attempts to secure bread or fuel "in retail fashion", "each man for himself", i.e., for "our" factory, "our" workshop, are only increasing the disorganisation and facilitating for the profiteers their selfish, filthy, and blackguardly work.

That is why, comrades, workers of Petrograd, I have taken the liberty of addressing this letter to you. Petrograd is not Russia. The Petrograd workers are only a small part of the workers of Russia. But they are one of the best, the advanced, most class-conscious, most revolutionary, most steadfast detachments of the working class and of all the working people of Russia, and one of the least liable to succumb to empty phrases, to spineless despair and to the intimidation of the bourgeoisie. And it has frequently happened at critical moments in the life of nations that even small advanced detachments of advanced classes have carried the rest with them, have fired the masses with revolutionary enthusiasm, and have accomplished tremendous historical feats.

"There were forty thousand of us at the Putilov Works," the delegate from the Petrograd workers said to me. "But the majority of them were 'temporary' workers, not proletarians, an unreliable, flabby lot. Now there are fifteen thousand left, but these are proletarians, tried and steeled in the fight."

That is the sort of vanguard of the revolution—in Petrograd and throughout the country—that must sound the call, must *rise together*, must understand that the salvation of the country is in their hands, that from them is demanded

a heroism no less than that which they displayed in January and October 1905 and in February and October 1917, that a great "*crusade*" must be organised against the grain profiteers, the kulaks, the parasites, the disorganisers and bribe-takers, a great "*crusade*" against the violators of strictest state order in the collection, transportation, and distribution of bread for the people and bread for the machines.

The country and the revolution can be saved only by the mass effort of the advanced workers. We need tens of thousands of advanced and steeled proletarians, class-conscious enough to explain matters to the millions of poor peasants all over the country and to assume the leadership of these millions, resolute enough to ruthlessly cast out of their midst and shoot all who allow themselves to be "tempted"—as indeed happens—by the temptations of profiteering and turn from fighters for the cause of the people into robbers; we need proletarians steadfast enough and devoted enough to the revolution to bear in an organised way all the hardships of the crusade and take it to every corner of the country for the establishment of order, for the consolidation of the local organs of Soviet power, and for the exercise of control in the localities over every pood of grain and every pood of fuel.

It is rather more difficult to do this than to display heroism for a few days without leaving one's accustomed place, without joining in a *crusade*, confining oneself to an impulsive uprising against the idiot monster Romanov or the fool and braggart Kerensky. Heroism displayed in prolonged and persevering organisational work on a national scale is immensely more difficult than, but at the same time immensely superior to, heroism displayed in an uprising. But the strength of working-class parties, the strength of the working class has always been that it looks danger boldly, squarely and openly in the face, that it does not fear to admit danger and soberly weighs the forces in "our" camp and in "the other" camp, the camp of the exploiters. The revolution is progressing, developing, and growing. The tasks we face are also growing. The struggle is broadening and deepening. Proper distribution of bread and fuel, their procurement in greater quantities and the very strict account and control of them by *the workers* on a national scale—that is the real and chief prelude to socialism. That is no longer a "general

revolutionary" task but a *communist* task, a task which requires that the working people and the poor engage capitalism in a decisive battle.

And this battle is worth giving all one's strength to it; the difficulties are great, but so is the cause of the abolition of oppression and exploitation for which we are fighting.

When the people are starving, when unemployment is becoming ever more terrible, anyone who conceals an extra pood of grain, anyone who deprives the state of a pood of fuel is an out-and-out criminal.

At such a time—and for a genuinely communist society, it is always true—every pood of grain and fuel is veritably sacred, much more so than the sacred things which priests use to confuse the minds of fools, promising them the kingdom of heaven as a reward for slavery on earth. And in order to rid this genuinely sacred thing of every remnant of the "sacredness" of the priests, we must *take possession of it practically*, we must achieve its proper distribution *in practice*, we must collect the whole of it without exception; every particle of surplus grain must be brought into the state stores, *the whole country must be swept clean* of concealed or ungarnered grain surpluses; we need the firm hand of the worker to harness every effort to increase the output of fuel and to secure the greatest economy of fuel, the greatest efficiency in its transportation and consumption.

We need a mass "crusade" of the advanced workers to every centre of production of grain and fuel, to every important centre of supply and distribution—a mass "crusade" to increase the intensity of work tenfold, to assist the local organs of Soviet power in the matter of accounting and control, and to eradicate profiteering, graft, and slovenliness by armed force. This is not a new task. History, properly speaking, is not advancing new tasks—all it is doing is to increase the size and scope of old tasks as the scope of the revolution, its difficulties, and the greatness of its world-historic aim increase.

One of the greatest and indefeasible accomplishments of the October Revolution—the Soviet revolution—is that the advanced worker, *as the leader* of the poor, *as the leader* of the toiling masses of the countryside, *as the builder of the state of the toilers*, has "gone among the people".

Petrograd and other proletarian centres have given thousands upon thousands of their best workers to the countryside. The detachments of fighters against the Kaledins and Dutovs, and the food detachments, are nothing new. Only the proximity of disaster, the acuteness of the situation compel us to do *ten times more* than before.

When the worker became the vanguard leader of the poor he did not thereby become a saint. He led the people forward, but he also became infected with the diseases of petty-bourgeois disintegration. The fewer the detachments of best organised, of most class-conscious, and most disciplined and steadfast workers were, the more frequently did these detachments degenerate, the more frequently did the small-proprietor instincts of the past triumph over the proletarian-communist consciousness of the future.

Having begun the communist revolution, the working class cannot instantly discard the weaknesses and vices inherited from the society of landowners and capitalists, the society of exploiters and parasites, the society based on the filthy selfishness and personal gain of a few and the poverty of the many. But the working class can vanquish the old world—*and in the end will certainly and inevitably vanquish it*—with its vices and weaknesses, if against the enemy are brought ever greater detachments of workers, ever more enlightened by experience and tempered by the hardships of the struggle.

Such and only such is the state of affairs in Russia today. Single-handed and disunited, we shall not be able to cope with famine and unemployment. We need a mass "crusade" of advanced workers to every corner of this vast country. We need ten times more *iron detachments* of the proletariat, class-conscious and boundlessly devoted to communism. Then we shall triumph over famine and unemployment. Then we shall make the revolution the real prelude to socialism, and then, too, we shall be in a position to conduct a victorious war of defence against the imperialist vultures.

May 22, 1918 *N. Lenin*

Pravda No. 101,
May 24, 1918

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the *Pravda* text

SPEECH AT THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF COMMISSARS FOR LABOUR[152] MAY 22, 1918

Comrades, permit me first of all to greet the Congress of Commissars for Labour in the name of the Council of People's Commissars. (*Enthusiastic applause.*)

At yesterday's session of the Council of People's Commissars, Comrade Shlyapnikov reported that your Congress had subscribed to the resolution of the trade unions on labour discipline and production rates. Comrades, I believe you have taken an important step in passing this resolution, which not only deals with the productivity of labour and production conditions, but is also a very important step in principle from the standpoint of the present situation in general. Your contact with the broad masses of the workers is constant and a matter of business and not merely a casual contact, and you know that our revolution is experiencing one of the most important and critical moments of its development.

You are fully aware that our enemies, the Western imperialists, are lying in wait for us, and that there may perhaps come a time when they will turn their hordes loose on us. That external enemy is now being joined by another dangerous enemy—the internal enemy—the disruption, chaos and disorganisation that are being intensified by the bourgeoisie in general and by the petty bourgeoisie in particular, and by various yes-men and hangers-on of the bourgeoisie. You know, comrades, that after the most brutal war, in which we were involved by the tsarist regime And by the collaborators headed by Kerensky, we were left with a heritage of disruption and extreme economic ruin. We now have to face the most critical moment, when hunger and unemployment are knocking at the door of an

increasing number of workers, when hundreds and, thousands of people are suffering the pangs of hunger, when the situation is being aggravated by there being no bread when there could be bread, when we know that the proper distribution of bread depends on proper transport of grain. The shortage of fuel since we have been cut off from the rich fuel regions, the catastrophic condition of the railways that may possibly be threatened with a stoppage of traffic—such are the conditions that breed difficulties for the revolution and fill with joy the hearts of the Kornilovites of all kinds and colours. They are now daily, hourly, perhaps, discussing how to take advantage of the difficulties of the Soviet Republic and proletarian power, how to again place a Kornilov on the throne. They are now arguing about what nationality the new Kornilov is to be—it must be someone who suits the bourgeoisie, whether he wears a crown or is a republican Kornilov. The workers now know what the matter is, and after what the Russian revolution has experienced since Kerensky, they are not a bit surprised. But the strength of the working-class organisation, of the working-class revolution, lies in our not closing our eyes to the truth, in our realising the exact state of affairs.

We have said that the war, such is its scale and incredible brutality, threatens the complete destruction of European civilisation. The only possible salvation is for the workers to take over power and establish strict law and order. Since 1905 the proletariat of Russia has for a certain time moved far ahead of the other international armies of the proletariat because of the course taken by the Russian revolution and a special historical situation. We have now reached the stage when the revolution is maturing in all West-European countries, when it is becoming clear that the situation of the armies of German workers is hopeless. We know that over there in the West, the working people are not confronted with the rotten regime of Romanov and empty boasters but by a bourgeoisie that is fully organised and can rely on all the achievements of modern civilisation and engineering. That is why it was so easy for us to start the revolution and more difficult to continue it, and why over there in the West it will be more difficult to start and easier to continue. Our difficulty is that every-

thing has to be done by the efforts of the proletariat of Russia alone, and that we have to maintain our position until our ally, the international proletariat of all countries, grows strong enough. Every day impresses it on us that there is no other way out. Our position is made more difficult because, without reinforcements, we are faced with disorganisation on the railways, with transport and food disruptions. There the question must be presented in a way that is clear to everyone.

I hope that the Congress of Commissars for Labour, which is in more immediate contact with the workers than anybody else—that this Congress will not only mark a stage in the direct improvement of those labour arrangements which we must make the basis of socialism, but that it will also serve to clear the minds of the workers in respect of the situation we are at present experiencing. The working class is confronted with a difficult but honourable task on which the fate of socialism in Russia depends, and probably in other countries, too. That is why a resolution on labour discipline is so important.

Now that power is firmly in the hands of the workers, everything depends on proletarian discipline and proletarian organisation. It is a question of discipline and the dictatorship of the proletariat, a question of iron rule. The type of government that meets with the warmest sympathy and very determined support of the poor must be as strong as iron, because incredible calamities are advancing upon us. A large section of the workers are living under the impression of the old and hope that we shall somehow manage to get out of the present situation.

Every day, however, these illusions are being shattered, and it is becoming more and more obvious that the world war threatens whole countries with famine and decay if the working class does not overcome the economic ruin by means of its organisational ability. Side by side with the politically conscious section of the working class whose entire activity is devoted to making the new discipline of comradeship the basis of everything, we see the many millions of petty property-owners, the petty-bourgeois element, who look at everything from the standpoint of their own narrow interests. We cannot fight against the famine and

disaster that are approaching, other than by establishing the iron discipline of the politically conscious workers—without it we can do nothing. Because of the huge extent of Russia we are living under conditions in which there is a lot of bread at one end of the country and none at the other. It is no use consoling ourselves with the thought that the war of defence that may be forced on us will not take place. It must not be thought that the towns and the huge industrial centres can be fed if food is not delivered regularly. Every pood of grain must be recorded so that not a single pood is wasted. We know, however, that no such record is really made, except on paper. In real life the petty profiteers are only corrupting the village poor by impressing on them that private trading can make up for their shortages. We cannot get out of the crisis under those conditions. In Russia there can be enough bread for the people and enough bread, i.e., fuel, for industry, only if everything we have is strictly divided among all citizens so that nobody can take an extra pound of bread and not a single pound of fuel can remain unused. That is the only way to save the country from famine. That is a lesson in communist distribution—everything accounted for, so that there is enough bread for the people and enough fuel for industry—and it is not a lesson taken from a book, it is one we have arrived at through bitter experience.

The broad masses of the workers may not immediately realise that we are face to face with disaster. What is needed is a workers' crusade against disorganisation and against the concealment of grain. And a crusade is needed to establish throughout the country the labour discipline you have passed a resolution on and have been talking about within the limits of the factories; the masses must be made to understand that there is no other way out. In the history of our revolution, the strength of the politically conscious workers has always been their ability to look the most bitter and dangerous reality straight in the face, to harbour no illusions but calculate their forces exactly. We can count on the politically conscious workers alone; the remaining mass, the bourgeoisie and the petty proprietors, are against us; they do not believe in the new order and take advantage of every opportunity to worsen the plight of the people. What

we see in the Ukraine and in Finland may serve as an example: the incredible atrocities and the seas of blood in which the bourgeoisie and its supporters, from the Constitutional-Democrats to the Socialist-Revolutionaries, are drowning the towns they conquer with the aid of their allies. All this goes to show what awaits the proletariat in the future if it does not fulfil its historic task. We know how small is the section of advanced and politically conscious workers in Russia. We also know the plight of the people and know that the broad masses are certain to realise that we cannot get out of the situation by half-measures, that there will have to be a proletarian revolution. We live at a time when countries are being ruined and millions of people are doomed to perish or subjected to military slavery. Hence, the revolution that history has forced on us, not by the evil will of individuals, but because the entire capitalist system is breaking up, because its foundations are cracking.

Comrades, Commissars for Labour, make use of every meeting you hold at any factory, of your talks with delegations of workers, make use of every opportunity to explain the situation, so that the workers know that we are faced with either destruction or self-discipline, organisation and the possibility to defend ourselves. Let them know that we are faced with a return of the Kornilovs—Russian, German or Japanese Kornilovs—who will bring a ration of an ounce of bread a week if the politically conscious workers, at the head of all the poor, do not organise a crusade against the chaos and disorganisation which the petty bourgeoisie are everywhere intensifying, and which we must put down. It is a question of every politically conscious worker feeling that he is not only the master in his own factory but that he is also a representative of the country, of his feeling his responsibility. The politically conscious worker must know that he is a representative of his class. He must win if he takes the lead in the movement against the bourgeoisie and the profiteers. The politically conscious worker will understand what the main task of the socialist is, and then we shall win. Then we shall find the forces and shall be able to fight. (*Loud, prolonged applause.*)

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and *Pravda* No. 101, May 24, 1918

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the *Pravda* text,
collated with the *Izvestia* text

THE SOCIALIST ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

I

DRAFT DECISION OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS[153]

The Council of People's Commissars, fully approving and welcoming the idea underlying the draft for the foundation of the Socialist Academy, instructs the Commissariat for Education to remake this draft on the following bases:

1)—a publishing society of a Marxist trend to be made the cornerstone;
2)—Marxist forces abroad to be enlisted in especially large numbers;
3)—a series of social investigations to be made one of the primary tasks;
4)—immediate measures to be taken to ascertain, assemble and utilise Russian personnel available for lecturing.

Written on May 25, 1918

First published in 1933
in *Lenin Miscellany XXI*

Published according to the manuscript

II

DIRECTIVES FOR THE COMMISSION

The Commission is to be instructed:

1) to make a detailed examination of the Rules of the Socialist Academy of Social Sciences for submission to the Council of People's Commissars and then to the C.E.C.;
2) to begin immediately an exchange of opinions on this question, and also on the question of membership, with non-Russian and foreign Marxists,
3) to compile and discuss a list of suitable and willing candidates as foundation members, and as teachers, for submission of this list to the Council of People's Commissars and the C.E.C.[154]

Written on June 7, 1918

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Published according to the manuscript

THESES ON THE CURRENT SITUATION[155]

1) The Commissariat for War to be converted into a Commissariat for War and Food—i.e., 9/10 of the work of the Commissariat for War to be concentrated on reorganising the army for the war for grain and on waging this war—for three months: June-August.

2) Martial law to be declared throughout the country during this period.

3) The army to be mobilised, selecting its sound elements, and 19-year-olds to be called up, at any rate in certain regions, for systematic military operations to fight for, win, collect and transport grain and fuel.

4) Shooting for indiscipline to be introduced.

5) The success of detachments to be measured by success in obtaining grain and by practical results in collecting grain surpluses.

6) The tasks of the military campaign should be formulated as follows:

a) the collection of stocks of grain for feeding the population;

b) ditto—for three months' food reserve for war;

c) safeguarding stocks of coal, collecting them and increasing output.

7) The detachments of the active army (active against kulaks, etc.) to consist of from one-third to one-half (in each detachment) of workers and poor peasants of the famine-stricken gubernias.

8) Each detachment to be issued two kinds of instruction:

a) ideological-political, on the importance of victory over famine and the kulaks, on the dictatorship of the proletariat as the working people's power;

b) military-organisational, on the internal organisation of the detachments, on discipline, on control and written documents of control for each operation, etc.

9) A collective liability of the whole detachment to be introduced, for example the threat of shooting every tenth man—for each case of plunder.

10) All means of transport belonging to rich persons in the towns to be mobilised for work in transporting grain; well-to-do classes to be mobilised to act as clerks and stewards.

11) If signs of demoralisation of the detachments become threateningly frequent, the "sick" detachments to be sent back after a month, i.e., exchanged, to the place from which they came, for report and "treatment".

12) The following to be adopted both in the Council of People's Commissars and in the Central Executive Committee:

(a) declaration that the country is in a state of grave *danger* as regards food;

(b) martial law;

(c) mobilisation of the army, together with its reorganisation as mentioned above, for the *campaign for grain*;

(d) in each uyezd and volost with grain surpluses, immediate compilation of a *list* of rich owners of land (kulaks), grain traders, etc., making them personally responsible for the collection of all grain surpluses;

(e) the appointment to each military detachment—at the rate of at least one out of approximately ten men—of persons with a party recommendation of the R.C.P., the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries or the trade unions.

13) In implementing the grain monopoly the most vigorous measures for assistance to the rural poor to be made obligatory without shrinking from any financial sacrifices, and measures for free distribution among them of part of the grain surpluses collected from the kulaks, side by side with ruthless suppression of kulaks who withhold grain surpluses.

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SPEECH, AT THE FIRST CONGRESS OF ECONOMIC COUNCILS[156] MAY 26, 1918

Comrades, permit me first of all to greet the Congress of Economic Councils in the name of the Council of People's Commissars. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, the Supreme Economic Council now has a difficult, but a most rewarding task. There is not the slightest doubt that the further the gains of the October Revolution go, the more profound the upheaval it started becomes, the more firmly the socialist revolution's gains become established and the socialist system becomes consolidated, the greater and higher will become the role of the Economic Councils, which alone of all the state institutions are to endure. And their position will become all the more durable the closer we approach the establishment of the socialist system and the less need there will be for a purely administrative apparatus, for an apparatus which is solely engaged in administration. After the resistance of the exploiters has been finally broken, after the working people have learned to organise socialist production, this apparatus of administration in the proper, strict, narrow sense of the word, this apparatus of the old state, is doomed to die; while the apparatus of the type of the Supreme Economic Council is destined to grow, to develop and become strong, performing all the main activities of organised society.

That is why, comrades, when I look at the experience of our Supreme Economic Council and of the local councils, with the activities of which it is closely and inseparably connected, I think that, in spite of much that is unfinished, incomplete and unorganised, we have not even the slightest grounds for pessimistic conclusions. For the task which the Supreme Economic Council sets itself, and the task which all the regional and local

councils set themselves, is so enormous, so all-embracing, that there is absolutely nothing that gives rise to alarm in what we all observe. Very often—of course, from our point of view, perhaps too often—the proverb "measure thrice and cut once" has not been applied. Unfortunately, things are not so simple in regard to the organisation of the economy on socialist lines as they are expressed in that proverb.

With the transition of all power—this time not only political and not even mainly political, but economic power, that is, power that affects the deepest foundations of everyday human existence—to a new class, and, moreover, to a class which for the first time in the history of humanity is the leader of the overwhelming majority of the population, of the whole mass of the working and exploited people—our tasks become more complicated.

It goes without saying that in view of the supreme importance and the supreme difficulty of the organisational tasks that confront us, when we must organise the deepest foundations of the existence of hundreds of millions of people on entirely new lines, it is impossible to arrange matters as simply as in the proverb "measure thrice and cut once". We, indeed, are not in a position to measure a thing innumerable times and then cut out and fix what has been finally measured and fitted. We must build our economic edifice as we go along, trying out various institutions, watching their work, testing them by the collective common experience of the working people, and, above all, by the results of their work. We must do this as we go along, and, moreover, in a situation of desperate struggle and frenzied resistance by the exploiters, whose frenzy grows the nearer we come to the time when we can pull out the last bad teeth of capitalist exploitation. It is understandable that if even within a brief period we have to alter the types, the regulations and the bodies of administration in various branches of the national economy several times, there are not the slightest grounds for pessimism in these conditions, although, of course, this gives considerable grounds for malicious outbursts on the part of the bourgeoisie and the exploiters, whose best feelings are hurt. Of course, those who take too close and too direct a part in this work, say, the Chief Water Board, do not always find it pleasant to alter the regulations, the norms and the laws of

administration three times; the pleasure obtained from work of this kind cannot be great. But if we abstract ourselves somewhat from the direct unpleasantness of extremely frequent alteration of decrees, and if we look a little deeper and further into the enormous world-historic task that the Russian proletariat has to carry out with the aid of its own still inadequate forces, it will become immediately understandable that even far more numerous alterations and testing in practice of various systems of administration and various forms of discipline are inevitable; that in such a gigantic task, we could never claim, and no sensible socialist who has ever written on the prospects of the future ever even thought, that we could immediately establish and compose the forms of organisation of the new society according to some predetermined instruction and at one stroke.

All that we knew, all that the best experts on capitalist society, the greatest minds who foresaw its development, exactly indicated to us was that transformation was historically inevitable and must proceed along a certain main line, that private ownership of the means of production was doomed by history, that it would burst, that the exploiters would inevitably be expropriated. This was established with scientific precision, and we knew this when we grasped the banner of socialism, when we declared ourselves socialists, when we founded socialist parties, when we transformed society. We knew this when we took power for the purpose of proceeding with socialist reorganisation; but we could not know the forms of transformation, or the rate of development of the concrete reorganisation. Collective experience, the experience of millions can alone give us decisive guidance in this respect, precisely because, for our task, for the task of building socialism, the experience of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of those upper sections which have made history up to now in feudal society and in capitalist society is insufficient. We cannot proceed in this way precisely because we rely on joint experience, on the experience of millions of working people.

We know, therefore, that organisation, which is the main and fundamental task of the Soviets, will inevitably entail a vast number of experiments, a vast number of steps, a vast number of alterations, a vast number of difficulties,

particularly in regard to the question of how to fit every person into his proper place, because we have no experience of this; here we have to devise every step ourselves, and the more serious the mistakes we make on this path, the more the certainty will grow that with every increase in the membership of the trade unions, with every additional thousand, with every additional hundred thousand that come over from the camp of working people, of exploited, who have hitherto lived according to tradition and habit, into the camp of the builders of Soviet organisations, the number of people who should prove suitable and organise the work on proper lines is increasing.

Take one of the secondary tasks that the Economic Council—the Supreme Economic Council—comes up against with particular frequency, the task of utilising bourgeois experts. We all know, at least those who take their stand on the basis of science and socialism, that this task can be fulfilled only when—that this task can be fulfilled only to the extent that international capitalism has developed the material and technical prerequisites of labour, organised on an enormous scale and based on science, and hence on the training of an enormous number of scientifically educated specialists. We know that without this socialism is impossible. If we reread the works of those socialists who have observed the development of capitalism during the last half-century, and who have again and again come to the conclusion that socialism is inevitable, we shall find that all of them without exception have pointed out that socialism alone will liberate science from its bourgeois fetters, from its enslavement to capital, from its slavery to the interests of dirty capitalist greed. Socialism alone will make possible the wide expansion of social production and distribution on scientific lines and their actual subordination to the aim of easing the lives of the working people and of improving their welfare as much as possible. Socialism alone can achieve this. And we know that it must achieve this, and in the understanding of this truth lies the whole complexity and the whole strength of Marxism.

We must achieve this while relying on elements which are opposed to it, because the bigger capital becomes the more the bourgeoisie suppresses the workers. Now that power

is in the hands of the proletariat and the poor peasants and the government is setting itself tasks with the support of the people, we have to achieve these socialist changes with the help of bourgeois experts who have been trained in bourgeois society, who know no other conditions, who cannot conceive of any other social system. Hence, even in cases when these experts are absolutely sincere and loyal to their work they are filled with thousands of bourgeois prejudices, they are connected by thousands of ties, imperceptible to themselves, with bourgeois society, which is dying and decaying and is therefore putting up furious resistance.

We cannot conceal these difficulties of endeavour and achievement from ourselves. Of all the socialists who have written about this, I cannot recall the work of a single socialist or the opinion of a single prominent socialist on future socialist society, which pointed to this concrete, practical difficulty that would confront the working class when it took power, when it set itself the task of turning the sum total of the very rich, historically inevitable and necessary for us store of culture and knowledge and technique accumulated by capitalism from an instrument of capitalism into an instrument of socialism. It is easy to do this in a general formula, in abstract reasoning, but in the struggle against capitalism, which does not die at once but puts up increasingly furious resistance the closer death approaches, this task is one that calls for tremendous effort. If experiments take place in this field, if we make repeated corrections of partial mistakes, this is inevitable because we cannot, in this or that sphere of the national economy, immediately turn specialists from servants of capitalism into servants of the working people, into their advisers. If we cannot do this at once it should not give rise to the slightest pessimism, because the task which we set ourselves is a task of world-historic difficulty and significance. We do not shut our eyes to the fact that in a single country, even if it were a much less backward country than Russia, even if we were living in better conditions than those prevailing after four years of unprecedented, painful, severe and ruinous war, we could not carry out the socialist revolution completely, solely by our own efforts. He who turns away from the socialist revolution now taking place

in Russia and points to the obvious disproportion of forces is like the conservative "man in a muffler" who cannot see further than his nose, who forgets that not a single historical change of any importance takes place without there being several instances of a disproportion of forces. Forces grow in the process of the struggle, as the revolution grows. When a country has taken the path of profound change, it is to the credit of that country and the party of the working class which achieved victory in that country, that they should take up in a practical manner the tasks that were formerly raised abstractly, theoretically. This experience will never be forgotten. The experience which the workers now united in trade unions and local organisations are acquiring in the practical work of organising the whole of production on a national scale cannot be taken away, no matter how difficult the vicissitudes the Russian revolution and the international socialist revolution may pass through. It has gone down in history as socialism's gain, and on it the future world revolution will erect its socialist edifice.

Permit me to mention another problem, perhaps the most difficult problem, for which the Supreme Economic Council has to find a practical solution. This is the problem of labour discipline. Strictly speaking, in mentioning this problem, we ought to admit and emphasise with satisfaction that it was precisely the trade unions, their largest organisations, namely, the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union and the All-Russia Trade Union Council, the supreme trade union organisations uniting millions of working people, that were the first to set to work independently to solve this problem and this problem is of world-historic importance. In order to understand it we must abstract ourselves from those partial, minor failures, from the incredible difficulties which, if taken separately, seem to be insurmountable. We must rise to a higher level and survey the historical change of systems of social economy. Only from this angle will it be possible to appreciate the immensity of the task which we have undertaken. Only then will it be possible to appreciate the enormous significance of the fact that on this occasion, the most advanced representatives of society, the working and exploited people are, on their own initiative, taking on them-

selves the task which hitherto, in feudal Russia, up to 1861, was solved by a handful of landed proprietors, who regarded it as their own affair. At that time it was their affair to bring about state integration and discipline.

We know how the feudal landowners created this discipline. It was oppression, humiliation and the incredible torments of penal servitude for the majority of the people. Recall the whole of this transition from serfdom to the bourgeois economy. From all that you have witnessed—although the majority of you could not have witnessed it—and from all that you have learned from the older generations, you know how easy, historically, seemed the transition to the new bourgeois economy after 1861, the transition from the old feudal discipline of the stick, from the discipline of the most senseless, arrogant and brutal humiliation and personal violence, to bourgeois discipline, to the discipline of starvation, to so-called free hire, which in fact was the discipline of capitalist slavery. This was because mankind passed from one exploiter to another; because one minority of plunderers and exploiters of the people's labour gave way to another minority, who were also plunderers and exploiters of the people's labour; because the feudal landowners gave way to the capitalists, one minority gave way to another minority, while the toiling and exploited classes remained oppressed. And even this change from one exploiter's discipline to another exploiter's discipline took years, if not decades, of effort; it extended over a transition period of years, if not decades. During this period the old feudal landowners quite sincerely believed that everything was going to rack and ruin, that it was impossible to manage the country without serfdom; while the new, capitalist boss encountered practical difficulties at every step and gave up his enterprise as a bad job. The material evidence, one of the substantial proofs of the difficulty of this transition was that Russia at that time imported machinery from abroad, in order to have the best machinery to use, and it turned out that no one was available to handle this machinery, and there were no managers. And all over Russia one could see excellent machinery lying around unused, so difficult was the transition from the old feudal discipline to the new, bourgeois, capitalist discipline.

And so, comrades, if you look at the matter from this angle, you will not allow yourselves to be misled by those people, by those classes, by those bourgeoisie and their hangers-on whose sole task is to sow panic, to sow despondency, to cause complete despondency concerning the whole of our work, to make it appear to be hopeless, who point to every single case of indiscipline and corruption, and for that reason give up the revolution as a bad job, as if there has ever been in the world, in history, a single really great revolution in which there was no corruption, no loss of discipline, no painful experimental steps, when the people were creating a new discipline. We must not forget that this is the first time that this preliminary stage in history has been reached, when a new discipline, labour discipline, the discipline of comradely contact, Soviet discipline, is being created in fact by millions of working and exploited people. We do not claim, nor do we expect, quick successes in this field. We know that this task will take an entire historical epoch. We have begun this historical epoch, an epoch in which we are breaking up the discipline of capitalist society in a country which is still bourgeois, and we are proud that all politically conscious workers, absolutely all the toiling peasants are everywhere helping this destruction; an epoch in which the people voluntarily, on their own initiative, are becoming aware that they must—not on instructions from above, but on the instructions of their own living experience—change, this discipline based on the exploitation and slavery of the working people into the new discipline of united labour, the discipline of the united, organised workers and working peasants of the whole of Russia, of a country with a population of tens and hundreds of millions. This is a task of enormous difficulty, but it is also a thankful one, because only when we solve it in practice shall we have driven the last nail into the coffin of capitalist society which we are burying. (*Applause.*)

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APPEAL TO RAILWAY, WATER TRANSPORT AND METAL WORKERS[157]

Having heard the representatives of the railway and water transport organisations, and the representatives of workers of metallurgical factories and the trade union of railway workers,

and having heard the proposal of these comrades to permit their organisations, the Central Food Bureau of the Commissariat for Ways of Communication, the Food Commission of the Chief Water Board of the Commissariat for Ways of Communication, etc., to carry out independent procurements,

the Council of People's Commissars insistently calls the attention of all organised, class-conscious and thinking workers and working peasants to the obvious unreasonableness of such proposals. It is clear to everyone that permitting the Central Food Bureau of the Commissariat for Ways of Communication, and food commissions of the Chief Water Board, of the Chief Metal Board and of the Chief Rubber Board, etc., to carry out separate independent procurements would completely ruin the whole food undertaking, would destroy every and any state organisation of workers and poor peasants and clear the way for the victory of the kulaks and Skoropadskys.

All workers and starving peasants must understand that only by joint efforts, by organising hundreds and thousands of the best workers in common food detachments, only by throwing the united, combined, common, mass forces of the workers into the struggle for order, for bread, is it possible to overcome famine and disorder, and defeat the profiteers and kulaks.

It is foolish to believe those who request independent procurements for the Central Food Bureau of the Commissa-

riat for Ways of Communication, for the Food Commission of the Chief Water Board, heedless of the fact that in *each uyezd* of the non-agricultural gubernias there are *tens* and hundreds of *thousands* of starving peasants who for months have received no grain at all.

Does it not spell ruin if the peasants in each uyezd are allowed separate procurements? Is it really fair to give the Central Food Bureau of the Commissariat for Ways of Communication, as it wants, 60 millions for independent procurements, without giving each famine-stricken uyezd ten millions, without giving it independent procurements?

Each railway workshop, every thousand office workers or water transport workers or factory workers should put forward a detachment of the best and most reliable persons in order by their joint, combined efforts to promote the general workers' and peasants' cause, that of salvation from famine, of victory over famine.

Separate, independent procurements spell the ruin of the whole food undertaking, the ruin of the revolution, collapse and disintegration.

Enlisting the best and most devoted workers from each thousand workers and office employees into detachments to form a general working-class fighting force for inculcating order, for aid in supervising, for collecting all grain surpluses, for complete victory over profiteers—in that alone is, salvation.

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JOINT SESSION OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, THE MOSCOW SOVIET OF WORKERS', PEASANTS' AND RED ARMY DEPUTIES AND THE TRADE UNIONS[158]

JUNE 4, 1918

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REPORT ON COMBATING THE FAMINE
JUNE 4, 1918

Comrades, the subject I am about to speak of today is the great crisis which has overtaken all modern countries and which perhaps weighs most heavily on Russia, or, at any rate, is being felt by her far more severely than by other countries. I must speak of this crisis, the famine which has afflicted us, in conjunction with the problems that confront us as a result of the general situation. And when we speak of the general situation, we cannot of course confine ourselves to Russia, particularly as all countries of modern capitalist civilisation are now bound together more painfully and more distressingly than ever before.

Everywhere, both in the belligerent countries and in the neutral countries, the war, the imperialist war between two groups of gigantic plunderers, has resulted in an utter exhaustion of productive forces. Ruin and impoverishment have reached such a pitch that the most advanced, civilised and cultured countries, which for decades, nay for centuries, had not known what famine means, have been brought by the war to the point of famine in the genuine and literal sense of the term. It is true that in the advanced countries, especially in those in which large-scale capitalism has long since trained the population to the maximum level of economic organisation possible under that system, they have succeeded in properly distributing the famine, in keeping it longer at bay and in rendering it less acute. But Germany and Austria, for example, not to speak of the countries that have been defeated and enslaved, have for a long time been suffering from real starvation. We can now open

hardly a single issue of a newspaper without coming across numerous reports from a number of the advanced and cultured countries—not only belligerent, but also neutral countries, such as Switzerland and certain of the Scandinavian countries—regarding the famine and the terrible hardships that have overtaken humanity as a result of the war.

Comrades, for those who have been following the development of European society it has for long been indisputable that capitalism cannot end peacefully, and that it must lead either to a direct revolt of the broad masses against the yoke of capital or to the same result by the more painful and bloody way of war.

For many years prior to the war the socialists of all countries pointed out, and solemnly declared at their congresses, that not only would a war between advanced countries be an enormous crime, that not only would such a war, a war for the partition of the colonies and the division of the spoils of the capitalists, involve a complete rupture with the latest achievements of civilisation and culture, but that it might, that, in fact, it inevitably would, undermine the very foundations of human society. Because it is the first time in history that the most powerful achievements of technology have been applied on such a scale, so destructively and with such energy, for the annihilation of millions of human lives. When all means of production are being thus devoted to the service of war, we see that the most gloomy prophecies are being fulfilled, and that more and more countries are falling a prey to retrogression, starvation and a complete decline of all the productive forces.

I am therefore led to recall how justified Engels, one of the great founders of scientific socialism, was, when in 1887, thirty years before the Russian revolution, he wrote that a European war would not only result, as he expressed it, in crowns falling from crowned heads by the dozen without anybody to pick them up, but that this war would also lead to the brutalisation, degradation and retrogression of the whole of Europe; and that, on the other hand, war would result either in the domination of the working class or in the creation of the conditions which would render its domination indispensable.[159] On this occasion the co-founder of Marxism expressed himself with extreme caution,

for he clearly saw that if history took this course, the result would be the collapse of capitalism and the extension of socialism, and that a more painful and severe transition period, greater want and a severer crisis, disruptive of all productive forces, could not be imagined.

And we now clearly see the significance of the results of the imperialist slaughter of the peoples which has been dragging on for more than three years, when even the most advanced countries feel that the war has reached an impasse, that there is no escape from war under capitalism, and that it will lead to agonising ruin. And if we, comrades, if the Russian revolution—which is not due to any particular merit of the Russian proletariat but to the general course of historical events, which by the will of history has temporarily placed that proletariat in a foremost position and made it for the time being the vanguard of the world revolution—if it has befallen us to suffer particularly severe and acute agony from the famine, which is afflicting us more and more heavily, we must clearly realise that these misfortunes are primarily and chiefly a result of the accursed imperialist war. This war has brought incredible misfortunes on all countries, but these misfortunes are being concealed, with only temporary success, from the masses and from the knowledge of the vast majority of the peoples.

As long as military oppression continues, as long as the war goes on, as long as, on the one hand, it is accompanied by hopes of victory and a belief that this crisis may be resolved by the victory of one of the imperialist groups, and, on the other hand, an unbridled military censorship prevails and the people are intoxicated by the spirit of militarism, as long as this continues the mass of the population of the majority of the countries, will be kept in ignorance of the abyss into which they are about to fall and into which half of them have already fallen. And we are feeling this with particular intensity now, because nowhere but in Russia is there such a glaring contrast to the vastness of the tasks the insurgent proletariat has set itself, realising that it is impossible to end the war, the world war between the world's most powerful imperialist giants, that this war cannot be ended without a mighty proletarian revolution, also embracing the whole world.

And since the march of events has placed us in one of the most prominent positions in this revolution and forced us to remain for a long time, at least since October 1917, an isolated contingent, prevented by events from coming quickly enough to the aid of other contingents of international socialism, the position we find ourselves in is now ten times more severe. Having done all that can be done by the directly insurgent proletariat, and the poor peasantry supporting it, to overthrow our chief enemy and to protect the socialist revolution, we find nevertheless that at every step oppression by the imperialist predatory powers surrounding Russia and the legacy of the war are weighing on us more and more heavily. These consequences of the war have not yet made themselves fully felt. We are now, in the summer of 1918, facing what is perhaps one of the most difficult, one of the most severe and critical transitional stages of our revolution. And the difficulty is not confined to the international arena, where our policy is inevitably bound to be one of retreat as long as our true and only ally, the international proletariat, is only preparing, is only maturing, for revolt, but is not yet in a position to act openly and concertedly, although the whole course of events in Western Europe, the furious savagery of the recent battles on the Western front, the crisis which is growing increasingly acute in the belligerent countries, all go to show that the revolt of the European workers is not far off, and that although it may be delayed it will inevitably come.

It is in a situation like this that we have to experience enormous internal difficulties, owing to which considerable vacillations have been caused mainly by the acute food shortage, by the agonising famine which has overtaken us and which compels us to face a task demanding the maximum exertion of effort and the greatest organisation, and which at the same time cannot be tackled by the old methods. We shall undertake the solution of this problem together with the class that was with us in opposing the imperialist war, the class together with which we overthrew the imperialist monarchy and the imperialist republican bourgeoisie of Russia, the class that must forge its weapons, develop its forces and create its organisation in the midst

of increasing difficulties, increasing tasks and the increasing scope of the revolution.

We are now facing the most elementary task of human society—to vanquish famine, or at least to mitigate at once the direct famine, the agonising famine which has afflicted both our two principal cities and numerous districts of agricultural Russia. And we have to solve this problem in the midst of a civil war and the furious and desperate resistance of the exploiters of all ranks and colours and of all orientations. Naturally, in such a situation those elements in the political parties which cannot break with the old and cannot believe in the new find themselves in a state of war, which is being exploited for only one aim—to restore the exploiters.

The news we are receiving from every corner of Russia demands that we shall face this question, the connection between the famine and the fight against the exploiters, against the counter-revolution which is raising its head. The task confronting us is to vanquish the famine, or at least to mitigate its severities until the new harvest, to defend the grain monopoly and the rights of the Soviet state, the rights of the proletarian state. All grain surpluses must be collected; we must see to it that all stocks are brought to the places where they are needed and that they are properly distributed. This fundamental task means the preservation of human society; at the same time it involves incredible effort, it is a task which can be performed in only one way—by general and increased intensification of labour.

In the countries where this problem is being solved by means of war, it is being solved by military servitude, by instituting military servitude for the workers and peasants; it is being solved by granting new and greater advantages to the exploiters. In Germany, for instance, where public opinion is stifled, where every attempt to protest against the war is suppressed, but where a sense of reality, of socialist hostility to the war nevertheless persists, you will find no more common method of saving the situation than the rapid increase in the number of millionaires who have grown rich on the war. These new millionaires have been enriching themselves fantastically.

In all the imperialist countries the starvation of the masses offers a field for the most furious profiteering; incredible fortunes are being amassed on poverty and starvation.

This is encouraged by the imperialist countries, e.g., Germany, where starvation is organised best of all. And not without reason is it said that Germany is a centre of organised starvation, where rations and crusts of bread are distributed among the population better than anywhere else. We see there that new millionaires are a common feature of the imperialist state; indeed, they know no other way of combating starvation. They permit twofold, threefold and fourfold profits to be made by those who possess plenty of grain and who know how to profiteer and to turn organisation, rationing, regulation and distribution into profiteering. We do not wish to follow that course, no matter who urges us to do so, whether wittingly or unwittingly. We say that we have stood and shall continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the class together with which we opposed the war, together with which we overthrew the bourgeoisie and together with which we are suffering the hardships of the present crisis. We must insist on the grain monopoly being observed, not so as to legitimise capitalist profiteering, large or small, but so as to combat deliberate racketeering.

And here we see greater difficulties and greater dangers than those that faced us when we were confronted by tsarism armed to the teeth against the people; or when we were confronted by the Russian bourgeoisie, which was also armed to the teeth, and which in the offensive of last June did not consider it a crime to shed the blood of hundreds of thousands of Russian workers and peasants while it kept in its pocket the secret treaties providing it with a share in the spoils, but which does consider it a crime for the toilers to wage war against the oppressors, the only just and sacred war, the war of which we spoke at the very outset of the imperialist slaughter and which events at every step are now inevitably associating with the famine.

We know that the tsarist autocracy from the very beginning instituted fixed prices for grain and raised those prices. Why not? It remained faithful to its allies, the

grain merchants, the profiteers and the banking magnates who made millions out of it.

We know how the compromisers of the Constitutional-Democratic Party—together with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks—and Kerensky introduced a grain monopoly, because all Europe was saying that without a monopoly they could not hold out any longer. And we know how this same Kerensky in August 1917 evaded the democratic law of the time. That is what democratic laws and artfully interpreted regimes are for—to be evaded. We know that in August Kerensky doubled those prices and that at that time socialists of every shade and colour protested against and resented this measure. There was not a single newspaper at the time that was not outraged by Kerensky's conduct and that did not expose the fact that behind the republican Ministers, behind the Cabinet of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, were the manipulations of the profiteers, that the doubling of grain prices was a concession to the profiteers, that the whole business was nothing but a concession to the profiteers. We know that story.

We can now compare the course of the grain monopoly and of the fight against the famine in European capitalist countries with the course taken in our country. We see what use the counter-revolutionaries are making of these events. They are a lesson from which we must draw definite and rigorous conclusions. The crisis, having reached the pitch of a severe famine, has rendered the civil war still more acute. It has led to the exposure of parties like the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who differ from that avowed capitalist party, the Constitutional-Democrats, only in that the Constitutional-Democratic Party is an open party of the Black Hundreds. The Constitutional-Democrats have nothing to say and are not obliged to address themselves to the people, they are not obliged to conceal their aims, whereas these parties, who compromised with Kerensky and shared power and the secret treaties with him, are obliged to address themselves to the people. (*Applause.*) And so they are from time to time forced to expose themselves, despite their wishes and their plans.

When, as a result of the famine, we see on the one hand an outbreak of uprisings and revolts of starving people and

on the other a series of counter-revolutionary rebellions spreading like fire from one end of Russia to the other, obviously fed with funds from the Anglo-French imperialists, and aided by the efforts of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, we say to ourselves the picture is clear and we leave it to whoever so desires to dream of united fronts.

And we now see very clearly that after the Russian bourgeoisie was defeated in open military conflict, all the open collisions between the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces in the period from October 1917 to February and March 1918 proved to the counter-revolutionaries, even to the leaders of the Don Cossacks, in whom the greatest hopes had been placed, that their cause was lost, lost because everywhere the majority of the people were opposed to them. And every new attempt, even in the most patriarchal districts, where the agriculturists are most wealthy and most socially isolated, from the outside world, as, for instance, the Cossacks—every new attempt without exception has resulted in new sections of the oppressed toilers actually rising against them.

The experience of the civil war in the period from October to March has shown that the masses of the working people, the Russian working class and the peasants who live by their own labour and not by exploiting others, are all over Russia, the vast majority of them, in favour of Soviet power. But those who thought that we were already on the path of greater organic development have been obliged to admit that they were mistaken.

The bourgeoisie saw that it was defeated.... Then there came a split among the Russian petty bourgeoisie. Some of them are drawn towards the Germans, others towards the Anglo-French orientation, while both have this in common, that they are united by the famine orientation.

In order that it may be clear to you, comrades, that it is not our Party but its enemies and the enemies of Soviet power who are reconciling the German orientation and the Anglo-French orientation and uniting them on a common programme, viz., to overthrow the Soviet power as the result of famine—in order to make it clear how this is taking

place, I will take the liberty of briefly quoting from the report of the recent conference of the Mensheviks.[160] This report appeared in the newspaper *Zhizn*.[161] (*Commotion and applause.*)

From this report, printed in No. 26 of *Zhizn*, we learn that Cherevanin, who made a report on economic policy, criticised the policy of the Soviet government and proposed a compromise solution of the problem—to enlist the services of representatives of merchant capital, as practical businessmen, to act as commission agents on terms which would be very favourable for them. We learn from this report that the chairman of the Northern Food Board, Groman, who was present at the conference, announced the following conclusions, which he had arrived at, so that report states, on the basis of a vast store of personal and of all sorts of other observations—observations, I would add, made entirely in bourgeois circles. "Two methods," he said, "must be adopted: the first is that present prices must be raised; the second, that a special reward must be offered for prompt deliveries of grain," etc. (*Voice*: "What is wrong with that?") Yes, you will hear what is wrong with that, although the speaker, who has not been given the floor, but has taken it from that corner over there (*applause*), thinks he can convince you that there is nothing wrong with it. But he has presumably forgotten the course the Menshevik conference took. This same paper, *Zhizn*, states that Groman was followed by the delegate Kolokolnikov, who said the following: "We are being invited to participate in the Bolshevik food organisations." Very wrong, is it not? That is what we have to say, recalling the interjection of the previous speaker. And if this speaker, who refuses to calm down and is taking the floor although he has not been granted it, cries out that it is a lie and that Kolokolnikov did not say that, I take note of the statement and request you to repeat that denial coherently and so that all may hear you. I take the liberty of recalling the resolution proposed at the conference by Martov, who is not unknown to you, and which on the question of the Soviet government literally says the same thing, although in different terms and phrases. (*Commotion*, *shouting.*) Yes, you may laugh, but the fact remains that in connection with a

report on the food situation Menshevik representatives say that the Soviet government is not a proletarian organisation, that it is a useless organisation.

And at such a time, when counter-revolutionary uprisings are breaking out owing to the famine, and taking advantage of the famine, no denials and no tricks will avail, for the fact is obvious. We see the policy on this question effectively developed by Cherevanin, Groman and Kolokolnikov. The Civil War is reviving, counter-revolution is raising its head, and I am convinced that ninety-nine per cent of the Russian workers and peasants have drawn—although not everybody yet knows this—are drawing and will draw their conclusion from these events, and that this conclusion will be that only by smashing counter-revolution, only by continuing a socialist policy over the famine, to combat the famine, shall we succeed in vanquishing both the famine and the counter-revolutionaries who are taking advantage of the famine.

Comrades, we are in fact approaching a time when Soviet power, after a long and severe struggle against numerous and formidable counter-revolutionary enemies, has defeated them in open conflict, and, having overcome the military resistance of the exploiters and their sabotage, has come to grips with the task of organisation. This difficult struggle with famine, this tremendous problem is actually explained by the fact that we have now come directly face to face with a task of organisation.

Success in an uprising is infinitely more easy. It is a million times easier to defeat the resistance of counter-revolution than to succeed in the sphere of organisation. This particularly applies to the cases when we dealt with a task in which the insurgent proletarian and the small property-owner, i.e., the broad sections of the petty bourgeoisie, among whom there were many general-democratic and general-labour elements, could to a considerable extent act together. We have now passed from this task to another. Serious famine has driven us to a purely communist task. We are being confronted by a revolutionary socialist task. Incredible difficulties face us here.

We do not fear these difficulties. We were aware of them. We never said that the transition from capitalism to social-

ism would be easy. It will involve a whole period of violent civil war, it will involve taking painful measures, when the contingent of the insurgent proletariat in one country is joined by the proletariat of another country in order to correct their mistakes by joint efforts. The tasks that face us here are organisational tasks, concerned with articles of general consumption, concerned with the deepest roots of profiteering, which are connected with the upper strata of the bourgeois world and of capitalist exploitation, and which cannot be so easily removed by mere mass pressure. We have to deal here with the roots and runners of bourgeois exploitation, the shallow ones and those that have taken a deep or shallow hold in all countries in the form of the small property-owners, their whole system of life, and in the habits and sentiments of the small property-owner and the small master; we have to deal here with the small profiteer, with his unfamiliarity with the new system of life, his lack of faith in it and his despair.

For it is a fact that when they sensed the tremendous difficulties that confront us in the revolution, many members of the working masses gave way to despair. We do not fear that. There never has been a revolution anywhere in which certain sections of the population were not overcome by despair.

When the masses put up a certain disciplined vanguard, and that vanguard knows that this dictatorship, this firm government, will help to win over all the poor peasants—this is a long process, involving a stern struggle—it is the beginning of the socialist revolution in the true sense of the term. But when we see that the united workers and the mass of poor peasants, who were about to organise against the rich and the profiteers, against the people to whom intellectuals like Groman and Cherevanin are wittingly or unwittingly preaching profiteers' slogans, when these workers, led astray, advocate the free sale of grain and the importing of freight transport, we say that this means helping the kulaks out of a hole! That path we shall never take. We declare that we shall rely on the working elements, with the help of whom we achieved the October victory, and that only together with our own class, and only by establishing proletarian discipline among all sections of the work-

ing population, shall we be able to solve the historic tasks now confronting us.

We have vast difficulties to overcome. We shall have to gather up all surpluses and stocks, properly distribute them and properly organise transportation for tens of millions of people. We shall have to see that the work proceeds with the regularity of clockwork. We shall have to overcome the disruption which is being fostered by the profiteers and by the doubters, who are spreading panic. This task of organisation can be accomplished only by the class-conscious workers, meeting the practical difficulties face to face. It is worth devoting all one's energies to this task; it is worth engaging in this last, decisive fight. And in this fight we shall win. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, the recent decrees on the measures taken by the Soviet government[162] show us that the path of the proletarian dictatorship, as every socialist who is a real socialist can see, will obviously and undoubtedly involve severe trials.

The recent decrees deal with the fundamental problem of life—bread. They are all inspired by three guiding ideas. First, the idea of centralisation: the uniting of everybody for the performance of the common task under leadership from the centre. We must prove that we are serious and not give way to despondency, we must reject the services of the bag-traders and merge all the forces of the proletariat; for in the struggle against the famine we rely on the oppressed classes and we see the solution only in their energetic resistance to all exploiters, in uniting all their activities.

Yes, we are told that the grain monopoly is being undermined by bag-trading and profiteering on every hand. We frequently hear the intellectuals say that the bag-traders are helping us, are feeding us. Yes, but the bag-traders are feeding us on kulak lines: they are doing just what is needed to establish, strengthen and perpetuate the power of the kulaks, to enable those who have power to extend that power over those around them with the help of their profits and through various individuals. And we assert that if the forces of those whose chief sin at the present moment is their lack of belief were to be united, the fight would he considerably easier. If there ever existed a revolutionary who hoped that we could pass to the socialist system with

out difficulties, such a revolutionary, such a socialist, would not be worth a brass farthing.

We know that the transition from capitalism to socialism is a struggle of an extremely difficult kind. But we are prepared to overcome a thousand difficulties, we are prepared to make a thousand attempts; and having made a thousand attempts we shall go on to the next attempt. We are now enlisting all the Soviet organisations in this new creative life, we are getting them to display new energies. We count on overcoming the new difficulties with the help of new strata, by organising the poor peasants and now I shall pass to the second main task.

I have said that the first idea that runs through all these decrees is that of centralisation. Only by collecting all the grain in common bag shall we be able to overcome the famine. And even then grain will barely suffice. Nothing is left of Russia's former abundance, and all minds must be deeply imbued with communism, so that everybody regards surplus grain as the property of the people and is alive to the interests of the working people. And this can be achieved only by the method proposed by the Soviet government.

When they tell us of other methods, we reply as we did at the session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.* When they talked of other methods, we said: Go to Skoropadsky, to the bourgeoisie. Teach them your methods, such as raising grain prices or forming a bloc with the kulaks. There you will find willing ears. But the Soviet government says only one thing, that the difficulties are immense and you must respond to every difficulty by new efforts of organisation and discipline. Such difficulties cannot be overcome in a single month. There have been cases in the history of nations when decades were devoted to overcoming smaller difficulties, and these decades have gone down in history as great and fruitful decades. You will never cause us to despond by referring to the failures of the first half-year or the first year of a great revolution. We shall continue to utter our old slogan of centralisation, unity and proletarian discipline on an all-Russia scale.

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* See this volume, pp. 365-81.—*Ed.*

When they say to us, as Groman says in his report, that "the detachments you have sent to collect grain are taking to drink and are themselves becoming moonshiners and robbers", we reply that we are fully aware how frequently this is the case. We do not conceal such facts, we do not whitewash them, we do not try to avoid them with pseudo-Left phrases and intentions. No, the working class is not separated by a Chinese wall from the old bourgeois society. And when a revolution takes place, it does not happen as in the case of the death of an individual, when the deceased is simply removed. When the old society perishes, its corpse cannot be nailed up in a coffin and lowered into the grave. It disintegrates in our midst; the corpse rots and infects us.

No great revolution has ever proceeded otherwise; no great revolution can proceed otherwise. The very things we have to combat in order to preserve and develop the sprouts of the new order in an atmosphere infested with the miasmas of a decaying corpse, the literary and political atmosphere, the play of political parties, which from the Constitutional-Democrats to the Mensheviks are infested with these miasmas of a decaying corpse, are all going to be used against us to put a spoke in our wheel. A socialist revolution can never be engendered in any other way; and not a single country can pass from capitalism to socialism except in an atmosphere of disintegrating capitalism and of painful struggle against it. And so we say that our first slogan is centralisation and our second slogan is the unity of the workers. Workers, unite and unite again! That is not new, it may not sound sensational or novel. It does not promise the specious successes with which you are being tempted by people like Kerensky, who in August 1917 doubled prices, just as the German bourgeois has raised them to twice and even ten times their level. These people promise you direct and immediate successes, as long as you offer new inducements to the kulaks. Of course that is not the road we shall follow. We say that our second method may be an old method, but it is a permanent method: Unite! (*Applause.*)

We are in a difficult situation. The Soviet Republic is perhaps passing through one of its most arduous periods. New strata of workers will come to our aid. We have no

police, we shall not have a special military caste, we have no other apparatus than the conscious unity of the workers. They will save Russia from her desperate and tremendously difficult situation. (*Applause.*) The workers must unite, workers' detachments must be organised, the hungry people from the non-agricultural districts must be organised—it is to them we turn for help, it is to them our Commissariat for Food appeals, it is they we call upon to join the crusade for bread, the crusade against the profiteers and the kulaks and for the restoration of order.

A crusade used to be a campaign in which physical force was supplemented by faith in something which centuries ago people were compelled by torture to regard as sacred. But we desire, we think, we are convinced, we know that the October Revolution has led the advanced workers and the advanced representatives of the poor peasants to regard the preservation of their power over the landowners and capitalists as sacred. (*Applause.*) They know that physical force is not enough to influence the masses of the population. We need physical force because we are building a dictatorship, we are applying force to the exploiters, and we shall cast aside with contempt all who fail to understand this, so as not to waste words in talking about the form of socialism. (*Applause.*)

We say that a new historical task is confronting us. We must get the new historical class to understand that we need detachments of agitators from among the workers. We need workers from the various uyezds of the non-producing gubernias. We need them to go thence as conscious advocates of Soviet power; they must sanctify and legitimise our food war, our war against the kulaks, our war against disorders; they must make possible the carrying on of socialist propaganda; they must establish in the countryside the distinction between the poor and the rich, which every peasant can understand and which is a profound source of our strength. It is a source which it is difficult to get to flow at full pressure, because the exploiters are numerous. And these exploiters resort to the most varied methods in order to subjugate the masses, such as bribing the poor peasants by permitting the latter to make money out of illicit distilling or to make a profit of several rubles on every ruble by selling at profiteering prices. Such are the methods to which

the kulaks and the rural bourgeoisie resort in order to establish their hold over the masses.

We cannot blame the poor peasants for this, for we know that they have been enslaved for hundreds, thousands of years, that they have suffered from serfdom and from the system which was left by serfdom in Russia. Our approach to the poor peasants must consist not only in the guns directed against the kulaks, but also in the propaganda of enlightened workers who bring the strength of their organisation into the countryside. Representatives of the poor, unite!—that is our third slogan. This is not making advances to the kulaks, and it is not the senseless method of raising prices. If we were to double prices, they would say: "They are raising prices. They are hungry. Wait a bit, they will raise prices still higher."

It is a well-trodden path, this path of playing up to the kulaks and profiteers. It is easy to take this path and to hold out tempting prospects. Intellectuals, who call themselves socialists, are quite prepared to paint such prospects for us; and the number of such intellectuals is legion. But we say to you: "You who wish to follow the Soviet government, you who value it and regard it as a government of the working people, as a government of the exploited class, on you we call to follow another path". This new historical task is a difficult thing. If we accomplish it, we shall raise a new stratum, give a new form of organisation to those sections of the working and exploited people, who are mostly downtrodden and ignorant, who are least united and have still to be united.

All over the world the foremost contingents of the workers of the cities, the industrial workers, have united, and united unanimously. But hardly anywhere in the world have systematic, supreme and self-sacrificing attempts been made to unite those who are engaged in small-scale agricultural production and, because they live in remote out-of-the-way places and in ignorance, have been stunted by their conditions of life. The task that faces us here unites for a single purpose both the fight against the food shortage and the fight for the profound and important system of socialism. The fight for socialism which faces us now is one to which it is worth devoting all our energies, for which it is worth

staking everything, because it is a fight for socialism (*applause*), because it is a fight for the state power of the working and exploited people.

In following this path we shall regard the working peasants as our allies. Solid achievements await us along this path, not only solid, but inalienable. That is our third significant slogan!

Such are the three fundamental slogans: centralisation of food work, unity of the proletariat and organisation of the poor peasants. And our appeal, the appeal of our Commissariat for Food, to every trade union, to every factory committee, says: Life is hard for you, comrades; then help us, join your efforts to ours, punish every breach of the regulations, every evasion of the grain monopoly. It is a difficult task; but fight bag-trading, profiteering and the kulaks, again and again, a hundred times, a thousand times, and we shall win. For this is the path on to which the majority of the workers are being led by the whole course of their lives and by the severity of our failures and trials in the matter of food supply. They know that, whereas when there was still no absolute shortage of grain in Russia the shortcomings of the food supply organisations were corrected by individual and isolated actions, this can no longer be the case now. Only the joint effort and the unity of those who are suffering most in the hungry cities and gubernias can help us. That is the path the Soviet government is calling on you to follow—unity of the workers, of their vanguard, for the purpose of carrying on agitation in the villages and of waging a war for grain against the kulaks.

According to the calculations of the most cautious experts, not far from Moscow, in gubernias quite close by—Kursk, Orel and Tambov—there is still a surplus of up to ten million poods of grain. We are very far from being able to collect this surplus for the common state fund.

Let us set about this task energetically. Let an enlightened worker go to every factory where despair is temporarily in the ascendant, and where, driven by hunger, people are prepared to accept the specious slogans of those who are reverting to the methods of Kerensky, to an increase of the fixed prices, and let him say: "We see people who are despairing of the Soviet government. Join our detachments of

militant agitators. Do not be dismayed by the many cases in which these detachments have disintegrated and turned to drink. We shall use every such example to show not that the working class is not fit, but that the working class has still not rid itself of the shortcomings of the old predatory society and cannot rid itself of them at once. Let us unite our efforts, let us form dozens of detachments, let us combine their activities, and in this way we shall get rid of our shortcomings."

Comrades, allow me in conclusion to draw your attention to some of the telegrams which are being received by the Council of People's Commissars and particularly by our Commissariat for Food.

Comrades, in this matter of the food crisis, of the torments of hunger that are afflicting all our cities, we observe that, as the proverb says, ill news hath wings. I should like to read you certain documents which were received by Soviet government bodies and institutions after the issue of the decree of May 13 on the food dictatorship, in which it is stated that we continue to rely only on the proletariat. The telegrams indicate that in the provinces they have already started to organise the crusade against the kulaks and to organise the rural poor, as we proposed. The telegrams we have received are proof of this.

Let the Cherevanins and the Gromans blow their trumpets, let their raucous voices sow panic and demand the destruction and abolition of the Soviet government! Those who are hard at work will be least disturbed by this; they will see the facts, they will see that the work is progressing and that new ranks are forming and uniting.

A new form of struggle against the kulaks is emerging, namely, an alliance of the poor peasants, who need assistance and who need to be united. It is proposed that awards be given for deliveries of grain, and we must help. We are willing to make such awards to the poor peasants, and we have already begun to do so. But against the kulaks, the criminals who are subjecting the population to the torments of hunger, and on account of whom millions of people are suffering, against them we shall use force. We shall give every possible inducement to the rural poor, for they are entitled to it. The poor peasant has for the first time

obtained access to the good things of life, and we see that he is living more meagerly than the worker. We shall encourage and give every possible inducement to the poor peasants and shall help them if they help us to organise the collection of grain, to secure grain from the kulaks. We must spare no resources to make that a reality in Russia.

We have already adopted this course, and it will be still further developed by the experience of every enlightened worker and by the new detachments.

Comrades, the work has been started and is progressing. We do not expect dazzling success, but success there certainly will be. We know that we are now entering a period of new destruction, one of the most severe and difficult periods of the revolution. We are not in the least surprised that counter-revolution is raising its head, that the number of waverers and despairers in our ranks is growing. We say: stop your wavering; abandon your despair, of which the bourgeoisie will take advantage, because it is in its interests to sow panic; get to work; with our food decrees and our plan based on the support of the poor peasants we are on the only right road. In the face of the new historical tasks we call upon you to make a new exertion of effort. This task is an infinitely difficult one, but, I repeat, it is an extremely rewarding one. We are here fighting for the basis of communist distribution and for the actual creation of the foundations of a communist society. Let us all set to work. We shall vanquish the famine and achieve socialism. (*Applause.*)

2

REPLY TO THE DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON COMBATING THE FAMINE JUNE 4, 1918

Comrades, the speeches of the representatives of the various groups have, in my opinion, shown what might have been expected.

Notwithstanding the differences that exist between the Bolsheviks and certain other parties and groups, we have convinced ourselves that the tremendous enthusiasm of the masses is uniting them in the struggle against the famine, and not only the Bolshevik organisations. And we have no doubt that the further the struggle against the famine proceeds and the more the counter-revolutionaries hiding behind the Czechoslovak and other bands show their faces, the more actively will the supporters of the Bolsheviks—the workers and the working peasant masses—dissociate themselves from those enemies, whatever they may call themselves, whose arguments we are disputing. These enemies go on using the old, hackneyed arguments about the Brest peace and the civil war, as though during the three months that have elapsed since the Brest peace was concluded events had not convincingly borne out the views of those who said that only the tactics of the Communists could bring the people peace and leave them free for the work of organising and uniting their forces in preparation for the new and great wars which are now about to take place, this time under different conditions. The events fully show that the European proletariat, which at that time was not yet in a position to come to our aid, is now with every month—that can be said today without exaggeration—approaching

the point when the necessity for revolt will be fully realised and revolt become inevitable. Events have fully shown that we had only one choice, namely, to accept a forced and predatory peace.

Every thinking person felt that the resolution moved by the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries at the Fourth Congress of Soviets was counter-revolutionary[163]; and every thinking person must feel the same about the resolution of the Mensheviks, who to this day keep crying, "Down with the Brest peace!" and who pretend they do not know that in doing so they actually want to embroil us in a war with the German bourgeoisie through the Czechoslovak mutineers[164] and agents hired for the purpose.

It is not worth while dwelling on the accusations that the Communists are responsible for the famine. We had the same thing during the October Revolution. No socialist or anarchist, call him what you will, who has not taken leave of his senses will venture to get up at any meeting and assert that socialism can be reached without civil war.

You may examine all the publications of all the more or less responsible socialist parties, factions and groups, and you will not find a single responsible and serious socialist saying anything so absurd as that socialism can ever come except through civil war, or that the landowners and capitalists will voluntarily surrender their privileges. That would be naïve to the point of stupidity. And now, after the bourgeoisie and its supporters have suffered a number of defeats, we hear admissions like that of Bogayevsky, for example, who on the Don had the best soil in Russia for counter-revolution, but who has also admitted that the majority of the people are against them—and therefore no subversive activities of the bourgeoisie will be of any avail without the aid of foreign bayonets. Yet the Bolsheviks are being attacked here for the civil war. That is tantamount to going over to the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, no matter what slogans are used to mask the fact.

As before the revolution, so now, we say that when international capital throws war on to the scales of history, when hundreds of thousands of people are perishing, and when war is remoulding people's habits and accustoming them to

settle issues by armed force, to think that we can emerge from the war in any other way than by converting it into a civil war is more than strange. And what is brewing in Austria, in Italy, in Germany shows that civil war in those countries will assume even keener forms, will be even more acute. There is no other way for socialism; and whoever wages war on socialism, betrays socialism completely.

As to food measures, it has been said that I have not dwelt on them in detail. But that was not part of my task. The report on the food question has been made by my colleagues,[165] who have been specially working on that problem, and doing so not for months but for years, studying it not only in the offices of Petrograd and Moscow, but in the provinces, and making a practical study of how to store grain, how to fit up the granaries, and so on. These reports were made to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and to the Moscow Soviet, and there you will find the material on the subject. As to specific criticism and practical recommendations, that was not part of my task. My task was to outline the principles of the problem that faces us, and I have not heard here any criticism worthy of any attention or any sensible objection worthy of examination from the standpoint of principle. And let me say in conclusion, comrades, that I am convinced, in fact I am sure, that this will be the conviction of the vast majority, for the purpose of our meeting is not to adopt a definite resolution—although, of course, that, too, is important, because it will show that the proletariat is capable of uniting its forces; but this is not enough, it is very, very far from enough—what we have to do now is to tackle practical problems.

We know, and our worker comrades know it especially, that at every step in practical life, in every factory, at every meeting, at every chance gathering in the streets, this same question of the famine is brought up, and in ever more acute forms. And therefore our chief task should be to make this meeting, too, where we have assembled with representatives from the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet and the trade unions, the starting-point for a radical change in all our practical work. Everything else must be entirely subordinated to the success of our propaganda, agitation and organisational work

in combating famine, that must be put before everything else and completely merged with the proletarian and ruthlessly firm war on the kulaks and profiteers.

Our Commissariat for Food has already appealed to the factory committees, the trade unions and the big proletarian centres, where we are operating directly, to those close and numerous links which unite the Moscow workers with hundreds of thousands of organised factory workers in all the big industrial districts.

All the more must we make use of them.

The situation is critical. Famine is not only threatening, it is already upon us. Every worker, every Party functionary must at once make it his practical job to change the fundamental trend of his activities.

Out into the factories, among the masses, all of you! Tackle the practical job at once! It will give us a host of practical hints as to far more fertile methods, and at the same time will help to discover and promote new forces. With the aid of these new forces we shall launch the work on a broad scale, and we are firmly convinced that the three months, which will be far more difficult than the preceding ones, will serve to steel our forces and will lead us to complete victory over famine and help to realise all the plans of the Soviet government. (*Applause.*)

3

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE REPORT ON COMBATING THE FAMINE JUNE 4, 1918[166]

This joint meeting draws the attention of all workers and working peasants to the fact that the famine which has overtaken many parts of the country demands of us the most vigorous and determined measures to combat this calamity.

The enemies of Soviet power, the landowners, capitalists and kulaks and their numerous hangers-on, want to take advantage of the calamity to engineer revolts, aggravate the chaos and disorder, overthrow the Soviet government, resurrect the old system of servitude and slavery for the working people, and restore the power of the landowners and capitalists, as has been done in the Ukraine.

Only the utmost exertion of all the efforts of the working class and the working peasantry can save the country from famine and safeguard the gains of the revolution from the attacks of the exploiting classes.

This joint meeting considers that the firm policy pursued by the Soviet government in combating the famine is an absolutely correct policy and the only correct one.

Only the strictest revolutionary order in every sphere of activity, and especially on the railways and in the water transport system, only the strictest discipline among the workers, and their self-sacrificing aid in the form of detachments of agitators and fighters against the bourgeoisie and the kulaks, and only the independent organisation of the rural poor can save the country and the revolution.

This joint meeting urgently appeals to all workers and peasants to set about this work, and by concerted and united effort to vanquish chaos, disorder and unco-ordinated effort.

Published according to the manuscript

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE FIRST ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF INTERNATIONALIST TEACHERS[167] JUNE 5, 1918

BRIEF REPORT

(*The Congress gave Lenin a rousing welcome.*) Lenin greeted the Congress on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars and said that the teachers, who had at first been rather slow in making up their minds to work with the Soviet government, were now growing more and more convinced that such collaboration was essential. Such cases of conversion from opposition to support of the Soviet government were very numerous among other sections of society too.

The army of teachers must set themselves tremendous tasks in the educational sphere, and above all must form the main army of socialist education. Life and knowledge must be liberated from the sway of capital, from the yoke of the bourgeoisie. The teachers must not confine themselves to narrow pedagogical duties. They must join forces with the entire body of the embattled working people. The task of the new pedagogics was to link up teaching activities with the socialist organisation of society.

It had to be admitted that the majority of the intellectuals of the old Russia were downright opponents of the Soviet regime, and there was no doubt that it would be not at all easy to overcome the difficulties this involved. The process of fermentation among the broad mass of the teachers had only just begun, and no schoolteacher who had the welfare of the people sincerely at heart could confine himself to the All-Russia Teachers' Union, but must confidently carry his

propaganda among the masses. This road would lead to a joint struggle of the proletariat and the teachers for the victory of socialism. (*Lenin left the hall amidst general applause.*)

Newspaper report published on June 6, 1918 in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 114,

Published according to the text of the *Transactions* of the *All-Russia Union of Internationalist Teachers* No. 1, 1918

TELEGRAM TO J. V. STALIN AND A. G. SHLYAPNIKOV

TSARITSYN
TO PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS STALIN AND SHLYAPNIKOV

I have received Stalin's third telegram and note. We are taking all measures. Tsyurupa says money will be sent tomorrow without fail, and orders have been given for the goods to be loaded today. Send through trains with a triple guard. Arrest saboteurs and hooligans and send them here.

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars
Lenin

Written not later than June 11, 1918

First published in 1931 in *Lenin Miscellany XVIII*

Published according to the manuscript

FOOD DETACHMENTS[168]

SPEECH AT WORKERS' MEETINGS IN MOSCOW
JUNE 20, 1918

BRIEF NEWSPAPER REPORT

From my visits to working-class areas in Moscow I have gained the firm conviction that the idea of the need to form food detachments has spread through the entire mass of the workers. A "distrustful" attitude is shown only by the print workers, who usually live better than the other workers, paid for by the bourgeoisie which is poisoning the minds of the poor with its newspaper slanders. The class-conscious attitude of the broad mass of the workers to such a basic issue of the Russian revolution as the struggle against famine gives me grounds for believing that socialist Russia will successfully survive all temporary failures and the devastation of the old regime. Even if we do not succeed in speedily dealing with the Czechoslovaks (which is most improbable), the large stocks of grain hidden by the kulaks in Voronezh, Orel and Tambov gubernias will enable us to get through the last two difficult months before the new harvest. The food problem is the most urgent problem of our revolution. All workers without exception must understand that the struggle for grain is their own vital concern.

The task undertaken by the food detachments is only that of helping to collect grain surpluses from the kulaks, and not (as our enemies are trying in advance to frighten the countryside into believing) to plunder all and sundry in the countryside.... Manufactured goods, thread and household and agricultural articles will definitely be provided in return for grain.

Steps will be taken to make it impossible for the detachments sent to the countryside to be joined by hooligans and swindlers, who always endeavour to fish in muddy waters. It is better to send fewer people, but ones who are suitable for the job.

It is true there have been cases of detachments being infiltrated by unstable, weak-willed workers, whom the kulaks have bribed with home-distilled vodka. But attention has been paid to this.... It is necessary to have accurate information of the past history of every worker going with a detachment. Inquiries must be made in the factory committee, the trade union and also in Party cells, as to the personal character of everyone whom the working class entrusts with such an important task.

Party comrades in many factories are unwilling to accept "non-Party" people in the detachment. This is quite wrong. A person who is "non-Party", but completely honest and with no stain on his reputation, can be a very valuable comrade in the starving people's campaign for grain.

To class-conscious detachments of this kind the Council of People's Commissars will give the broadest assistance by providing money and manufactured goods, and also arms.

What matters is that the workers should actively and with the utmost speed take up their own vital cause—the struggle against famine!...

Bednota No. 69,
June 21, 1918

Published according to
the *Bednota* text

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC MEETING IN THE SOKOLNIKI CLUB JUNE 21, 1918

BRIEF NEWSPAPER REPORT

Our Party has decided to hold as many public meetings today in Moscow as possible with the object of drawing the attention of the working class to the situation in which the Soviet government is placed and to the efforts it will have to make in order to cope successfully with the present situation.

You know that in these past few months, and even weeks, counter-revolution has raised its head. The Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks are accusing the Soviet government of betraying Russia to the German imperialists.

However, we are perfectly aware of what has been taking place in the Caucasus, where the Caucasian Mensheviks have concluded an alliance with the Turkish imperialists, and in the Ukraine, where the Ukrainian Right Socialist-Revolutionaries have concluded an alliance with the German imperialists. And what is more, comrades, not only have they reduced all the achievements of Soviet power to naught in these regions, not only are they arresting and shooting workers, not only have they deprived them of all their gains, but they have even set a Skoropadsky in the saddle. These measures, of course, will not win them the sympathy of the working class. That is why the counter-revolutionaries are now trying to make the most out of the fatigue of the Russian people, out of the famine. They are making a last attempt to overthrow the Soviet government.

Now they are clutching at the Czechoslovaks, who, it should be said, are by no means hostile to the Soviet

government. It is not the Czechoslovaks, but their counter-revolutionary officers who are hostile to the Soviet government. With the help of these officers, the imperialists are trying to drag Russia into the world slaughter which is still going on.

And it is a characteristic thing that wherever the power passes into the hands of the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, we at once find that they want to bestow upon us some Skoropadsky or other. And as soon as the masses realise where the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries have led them, the latter are left without the support of the masses.

They are left without support. Then, as a last hope, they begin to speculate on famine, and when that too fails, they do not shrink even from treacherous assassination.

You all know that Comrade Volodarsky, an old Party worker, who paid for his convictions by suffering and hardships, has been assassinated. It is quite possible of course that they may succeed in assassinating a few more active members of the Soviet government, but that will only serve to anchor it in the affections of the masses and rouse us to hold on even more firmly to our gains.

Today there are two factors which render the position of the Soviet Republic particularly grave: famine and the international situation.

The international situation is grave because the German, French and British imperialists are only waiting for an opportune moment to fling themselves once more on the Soviet Republic. The task of our Party is to throw off the yoke of capitalism; this can only be done by an international revolution. But, comrades, you must realise that revolutions are not made to order. We realise that the position of the Russian Republic is that the Russian working class has been the first to succeed in throwing off the yoke of capital and the bourgeoisie, and we realise that it has succeeded in this, not because it is more advanced and perfect than others, but because our country is a most backward one.

Capitalism will be finally overthrown when at least a few other countries join in this assault. And we know that in all countries, in spite of a most rigorous censorship, we have succeeded in this much, that at all meetings the mere

mention of the Communist Party and of the Russian Republic evokes an outburst of enthusiasm. (*Loud applause.*)

And we say that as long as the world carnage continues over there in the West, we are secure. Whatever the consequences of the war may be, it is bound to call forth revolution, which will be, and is, our ally.

After describing the grave position of Soviet Russia, surrounded as it is by enemies without and attacked by counter-revolution at home, Lenin passed to the subject of the famine.

Our revolution strikes terror into the imperialist classes, for they are clearly aware that their existence depends on whether capitalism manages to hold on or not, and we must therefore stand fast and march shoulder to shoulder with the class with which we won the October Revolution.

It is with this same class that we are marching in the fight against the famine.

From now on, for one, one and a half or two months—the most difficult of all—we must exert all of our strength and energies.

There have been moments in the life of nations before now when state power passed into the hands of the working class; but it was never able to retain it. We, however, can retain it, for we have our Soviet government, which unites a working class that has taken its cause into its own hands.

However grave our position may be, whatever plots the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Czechoslovaks may hatch, we know that there is grain available even in the provinces surrounding the capital. And we must secure this grain by preserving and strengthening the alliance between the working class and the poor peasants.

Detachments of Red Army men leave the capital with the best intentions in the world, but, on arriving at their destination, they sometimes succumb to the temptations of looting and drunkenness. For this we have to blame the four years of carnage, which kept men in the trenches for so long and compelled them to slaughter each other like wild beasts. This bestiality is to be observed in all countries. Years will pass before men cease to act like beasts and resume human shape.

We appeal to the workers to let us have men.

PROMARX NOMAD NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

When I read a report to the effect that in Usman Uyezd, Tambov Gubernia, a food detachment turned over to the poor peasants 3,000 of the 6,000 poods of grain it had requisitioned, I declare that even if you were to prove to me that to this day there has been only one such detachment in Russia, I should still say that the Soviet government is doing its job.[169] For in no other country in the world will you find such a detachment! (*Loud applause.*)

The bourgeoisie is fully conscious of its interests and is doing its utmost to safeguard them. It knows that if this autumn, for the first time in many centuries, the peasants reap the fruits of their own labour in the shape of the crop, and keep the working class of the town supplied, all its hopes of restoration will collapse and the Soviet government will be strengthened. That is why the bourgeoisie is now displaying such feverish activity.

We must bend all our efforts to combat the rich peasants, the profiteers and the urban bourgeoisie.

One of the greatest drawbacks of our revolution is the timidity of our workers, who are still convinced that the only people capable of governing the state are their "betters"—their betters in the art of robbery.

But there are fine workers in every mill and factory. No matter if they do not belong to the Party—you must weld them together and unite them, and the state will do everything in its power to help them in their difficult work, (*Loud applause.*)

Izvestia VTsIK No. 127 and 128, June 22 and 23, 1918; *Pravda* No. 126, June 23, 1918

Published according to the *Izvestia* text, collated with the *Pravda* text

ORGANISATION OF FOOD DETACHMENTS[170]

In view of the fact that it is too late to send a delegate from the Commissariat for Food to the Congress, I request you to bring the following to the attention of the Congress. Delegates to the Congress who support the Soviet government should remember, firstly, that the grain monopoly is being enforced simultaneously with a monopoly on textiles and on other staple articles of general consumption, and, secondly, that the demand for the abolition of the grain monopoly is a political move on the part of counter-revolutionary strata, who are endeavouring to wrench from the hands of the revolutionary proletariat the system of monopoly regulation of prices, one of the most important implements for the gradual transition from capitalist exchange of commodities to socialist exchange of products. Explain to the Congress that as a method of combating the food shortage the abolition of the monopoly would be not only useless but harmful, as is shown by the Ukraine, where Skoropadsky has abolished the grain monopoly and as a result profiteering in grain has within a few days achieved such proportions that the Ukrainian proletariat is now suffering from famine far more acutely than under the monopoly.

Point out that the only effective method of increasing bread rations is contained in the decision of the Council of People's Commissars to requisition grain forcibly from the kulaks and to distribute it among the poor of the cities -and the countryside. This requires that the poor shall much more rapidly and resolutely enlist in the food army which is being created by the People's Commissariat for Food.

Propose that the Congress immediately start agitating among the workers to enlist ill the food army formed by the

Penza Soviet of Deputies and to abide by the following rules:

1) Every factory shall provide one person for every twenty-five of its workers.

2) Registration of those desiring to enlist in the food army shall be conducted by the factory committee, which shall draw up a list of the names of those mobilised, in two copies, one of which it shall deliver to the People's Commissariat for Food while retaining the other.

3) To the list must be attached a guarantee given by the factory committee, or by the trade union organisation, or by a Soviet body, or by responsible representatives of Soviet organisations, testifying to the personal honesty and revolutionary discipline of every candidate. Members of the food army must be selected so that there will not in future be a single stain on the names of those who are setting out for the villages to combat the handful of predatory kulaks and save millions of toilers from starvation.

Comrades, workers, only if this condition is observed will it be obvious to all that the requisition of grain from the kulaks is not robbery but the fulfilment of a revolutionary duty to the worker and peasant masses who are fighting for socialism!

4) In every factory those mobilised shall elect a representative from their midst to perform all the organisational measures necessary for the actual enrolment of the candidates of the factory as members of the food army by the People's Commissariat.

5) Those enrolled in the army shall receive their former pay as well as food and equipment from the date of actual enlistment.

6) Those enrolled in the army shall give a pledge that they will unreservedly carry out any instructions that may be given by the People's Commissariat for Food when the detachments leave for their place of operation, and that they will obey the commissars of the detachments.

I am certain that if convinced socialists loyal to the October Revolution are placed at the head of the food requisition detachments, they will be able to organise Poor Peasants' Committees[171] and by their concerted action

succeed in taking grain from the kulaks even without resort to armed force.

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

June 27, 1918 *Lenin*

Published on July 1918
in the magazine *Bulletin of the People's Commissariat for Food* No. 10-11

Published according to the magazine text

FOURTH CONFERENCE OF TRADE UNIONS AND FACTORY COMMITTEES OF MOSCOW[172]

JUNE 27-JULY 2, 1918

Brief reports published on June 28, 1918 in *Pravda* No. 130 and *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 132

Full report published in 1918 in the book: *Minutes of the Fourth Conference of Factory Committees and Trade Unions of Moscow*, A.C.C.T.U. Publishers

Published according to the text of the book, collated with the verbatim report

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1

REPORT ON THE CURRENT SITUATION
JUNE 27, 1918

Comrades, you all know, of course, of the great disaster that has befallen our country, namely, famine. Before discussing the measures to be adopted to combat this disaster, which has now become more acute than ever, we must first of all discuss its main causes. In discussing this question we must say to ourselves, and remember, that this disaster has befallen not only Russia, but all, even the most cultured, advanced and civilised countries.

In Russia, where the overwhelming majority of the peasantry were ruined and oppressed by the yoke of the tsars, the landowners and capitalists, famine more than once in the past few decades affected whole regions of our agrarian country. And it has affected us particularly now, during the revolution. But this disaster reigns also in the West-European countries. Many of these countries had not known what famine was for decades and even centuries, so highly was agriculture developed there, and to such an extent were those European countries which could not produce a sufficient supply of grain of their own assured of an enormous quantity of imported grain. But now, in the twentieth century, side by side with still greater progress in technology, side by side with wonderful inventions, side by side with the wide application of machinery and electricity, of modern internal combustion engines in agriculture, side by side with all this we now see this same disaster of famine advancing upon the people in all European countries without exception. It would seem that despite civilisation, despite culture, the countries are once again returning

to primitive savagery are again experiencing a situation when morals deteriorate and people become brutalised in the struggle for a crust of bread. What has caused this return to savagery in a number of European countries, in the majority of them? We all know that it has been caused by the imperialist war, by the war which has been torturing humanity for four years, a war which has already cost the peoples more, far more than ten million young lives, a war which was called forth by the avarice of the capitalists, a war which is being waged to decide which of the great robbers—the British or the German—shall rule the world, acquire colonies and strangle the small nations.

This war, which has affected almost the whole of the globe, which has destroyed not less than ten million lives, not counting the millions of maimed, crippled and sick, this war which, in addition, has torn millions of the healthiest and best forces from productive labour—this war has reduced humanity to a state of absolute savagery. What numerous socialist writers foresaw as the worst, most painful and most unbearable end of capitalism has come to pass. They said: capitalist society, based on the private ownership of the land, the factories and tools by a handful of capitalists, of monopolists, will be transformed into socialist society, which alone is capable of putting an end to war, because the "civilised", "cultured" capitalist world is heading for unprecedented bankruptcy, which is capable of undermining and will inevitably undermine all the foundations of cultured life. I repeat, we see famine not only in Russia, but in the most cultured, advanced countries, like Germany, where the productivity of labour is incomparably greater, which can supply the world with more than a sufficiency of technical appliances, and which, still maintaining free intercourse with remote countries, can supply her population with food. The famine there is incomparably better "organised", it is spread over a longer period than in Russia, but it is famine nevertheless, still more severe and more painful than here. Capitalism has led to such a severe and painful disaster that it is now perfectly clear to all that the present war cannot end without a number of most severe and bloody revolutions, of which the Russian revolution was only the first, only the beginning.

You have now received news to the effect that in Vienna for example, an *Arbeiterrat* has been established for the second time, and for the second time the working population have come out on an almost general mass strike.[173] We hear that in cities like Berlin, which up to now have been models of capitalist order, culture and civilisation, it is becoming dangerous to go out into the street after dark, because, in spite of the very severe measures and the very strict guard that is kept, the war and famine have reduced people to such a state of absolute savagery, have led to such anarchy, have roused such indignation, that not merely the sale, but downright looting, an actual war for a crust of bread, is becoming the order of the day in all cultured, civilised countries.

Hence, comrades, since a painful and difficult situation has been created in our country as a consequence of the famine, we must explain to the few absolutely blind and ignorant people (though few, they do still exist) the main and principal causes of the famine. We can still meet people in our country who argue in this way: but under the tsar we had bread; the revolution has come and there is no bread. Naturally, it is quite possible that for some old village women the development of history during the past ten years is summed up entirely by the fact that formerly there was bread and now there is none. This is comprehensible, because famine is a disaster which sweeps away all other questions, which takes its place as the cornerstone, and overrules everything else. But it goes without saying that our task, the task of the class-conscious workers, is to explain to the broad masses, to explain to all the representatives of the working masses in town and country the principal cause of the famine; for unless we explain this we shall not be able to create a proper attitude either among ourselves or among the representatives of the working masses, we shall not be able to create a proper understanding of its harmfulness and we shall not be able to create that firm determination and temper that is required to combat this disaster. If we remember that this disaster was caused by the imperialist war, that today even the richest countries are experiencing unprecedented food shortages and that the overwhelming majority of the working masses are suffering incredible torture; if

we remember that for four years already this imperialist war has been compelling the workers of the various countries to shed their blood for the benefit of the greedy capitalists, and if we remember that the longer the war lasts, the fewer become the ways out of it, we will understand what gigantic, immense forces will have to be set moving.

The war has lasted nearly four years. Russia has come out of the war, and owing to the fact that she has come out of the war alone she has found herself between two gangs of imperialist plunderers, each of which is clutching at her, strangling her and taking advantage of her temporary defencelessness and lack of arms. The war has already lasted four years. The German imperialist plunderers have achieved a number of victories and continue to deceive their workers, a section of whom, bribed by the bourgeoisie, have deserted to the side of the German imperialists and continue to repeat the despicable lie about the defence of the fatherland when as a matter of fact the German soldiers are defending the selfish predatory interests of the German capitalists who have promised them that Germany will bring peace and prosperity. Actually we see that the more extensive Germany's victories become the more the hopelessness of her position is revealed.

When the forced, exploiters' peace of Brest, a peace based upon violence and the oppression of peoples, was concluded, Germany, the German capitalists boasted that they would give the workers bread and peace. But now they are reducing the bread ration in Germany. It is universally admitted that the food campaign in the rich Ukraine has been a failure. In Austria the situation has again reached the stage of hunger riots, of nation-wide outbursts of indignation, because the more Germany is victorious the clearer it becomes to all, even to many representatives of the big bourgeoisie in Germany, that the war is hopeless. They are beginning to realise that even if the Germans are able to maintain their resistance on the Western front it will not bring the end of the war any nearer but will create another enslaved country which will have to be occupied by German troops and make it necessary to continue the war; and this will lead to the disintegration of the German army, which is being transformed from an army into a gang of plunderers

violating foreign peoples, unarmed peoples, and extracting from their countries the last remnants of food supplies and raw materials in the face of tremendous resistance from the population. The closer Germany approaches the outer frontiers of Europe the clearer it becomes that she is confronted by Britain and America, which are far more developed than she is, which have greater productive forces, which have had time to dispatch tens of thousands of the best new forces to Europe, and to transform all their machines and factories into instruments of destruction. The war is receiving fresh fuel, and that means that every year, nay every month, sees the further extension of this war. There is no other way out of this war except revolution, except civil war, except the transformation of the war between capitalists for profits, for the sharing of the loot, for the strangulation of small countries, into a war of the oppressed against the oppressors, a war which always accompanies not only great revolutions but every serious revolution in history, a war which is the only war that is legitimate and just, a holy war from the point of view of the interests of the working people, of the oppressed and of the exploited masses. (*Applause.*) Without such a war there can be no liberation from imperialist slavery. We must be perfectly clear in our minds about the new disasters that civil war brings for every country. The more cultured a country is the more serious will be these disasters. Let us picture to ourselves a country possessing machinery and railways in which civil war is raging, and this civil war cuts off communication between the various parts of the country. Picture to yourselves the condition of regions which for decades have been accustomed to living by the interchange of manufactured goods and you will understand that every civil war brings fresh disasters, which the great socialists foresaw. The imperialists doom the working class to disaster, suffering and extinction. Intolerable and painful as all this may be for the whole of mankind, it is becoming clearer and clearer every day to the new socialist society that the imperialists will not be able to put an end to the war which they started; other classes will end it—the working class, which in all countries is becoming more and more active every day, more and more angry and indignant, and which, irres-

pective of sentiments and moods, the force of circumstances is compelling to overthrow the rule of the capitalists. We, in Russia, are particularly affected by the disaster of famine and are passing through a period more difficult than had ever been experienced by any revolution, and we cannot count on immediate aid from our West-European comrades. The whole difficulty of the Russian revolution is that it was much easier for the Russian revolutionary working class to start than it is for the West-European classes, but it is much more difficult for us to continue. It is more difficult to start a revolution in West-European countries because there the revolutionary proletariat is opposed by the higher thinking that comes with culture, and the working class is in a state of cultural slavery.

Meanwhile, because of our international position, we must pass through an incredibly difficult time, and we representatives of the working masses. We workers, class-conscious workers, in all our agitation and propaganda, in every speech we deliver, in every appeal we issue, in our talks in the factories and at every meeting with peasants, must explain that the disaster that has befallen us is an international disaster and that there is no other way out of it except world revolution. Since we must pass through such a painful period in which we temporarily stand alone, we must exert all our efforts to bear the difficulties of this period staunchly, knowing that in the last analysis we are not alone, that the disaster which we are experiencing is creeping upon every European country, and that not one of these countries will be able to extricate itself except by a series of revolutions.

Russia has been afflicted by famine, which has been made more acute by the fact that the imposed peace has deprived her of the most fertile grain-bearing gubernias, and it has also been made more acute by the fact that the old food campaign is drawing to a close. We still have several weeks to go before the next harvest, which will undoubtedly be a rich one; and these few weeks will be a very difficult period of transition which, being a difficult one generally, is rendered still more critical by the fact that in Russia the deposed exploiting classes of landowners and capitalists are doing all they can, are exerting every effort to restore their power.

This is one of the main reasons why the grain-bearing gubernias of Siberia are cut off from us as a result of the Czechoslovak mutiny. But we know very well what forces are behind this revolt, we know very well that the Czechoslovak soldiers are declaring to the representatives of our troops, of our workers and of our peasants, that they do not want to fight against Russia and against the Russian Soviet government, that they only want to make their way by force of arms to the frontier. But at their head stand yesterday's generals, landowners and capitalists, who are financed by the British and the French and enjoy the support of Russian traitors to socialism who have deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie. (*Applause.*)

The whole gang of them is taking advantage of the famine to make another attempt to restore the landowners and the capitalists to power. Comrades, the experience of our revolution confirms the correctness of the words which always distinguish the representatives of scientific socialism, Marx and his followers, from the utopian socialists, from the petty-bourgeois socialists, from the socialist intellectuals and from the socialist dreamers. The intellectual dreamers, the petty-bourgeois socialists, thought, and perhaps still think, or dreamt that it is possible to introduce socialism by persuasion. They think that the majority of the people will be convinced, and when they become convinced the minority will obey; that the majority will vote and socialism will be introduced. (*Applause.*) No, the world is not built so happily; the exploiters, the brutal landowners, the capitalist class are not amenable to persuasion. The socialist revolution confirms what everybody has seen—the furious resistance of the exploiters. The stronger the pressure of the oppressed class becomes, the nearer they come to overthrowing all oppression, all exploitation, the more resolutely the oppressed peasantry and the oppressed workers display their own initiative, the more furious does the resistance of the exploiters become.

We are passing through a very severe and very painful period of transition from capitalism to socialism, a period which will inevitably be a very long one in all countries because, I repeat, the oppressors retaliate to every success achieved by the oppressed class by fresh attempts at resist-

ance, by attempts to overthrow the power of the oppressed class. The Czechoslovak mutiny, which is obviously being supported by Anglo-French imperialism in the pursuit of its policy of overthrowing the Soviet government, illustrates what this resistance can be. We see that this mutiny is, of course, spreading because of the famine. It is understandable that among the broad masses of the toilers there are many (you know this particularly well; every one of you sees this in the factories) who are not enlightened socialists and cannot be such because they have to slave in the factories and they have neither the time nor the opportunity to become socialists. It is understandable that these people should be in sympathy when they see the workers coming to the fore in the factory, when they see that these workers obtain the opportunity to learn the art of managing factories—a difficult and exacting task in which mistakes are inevitable, but the only task in which the workers can at last realise their constant striving to make the machines, the factories, the works, the best of modern techniques, the best achievements of humanity serve not purposes of exploitation, but the purpose of improving and easing the lives of the overwhelming majority. But when they see the imperialist plunderers in the West, in the North and in the East taking advantage of Russia's defencelessness to tear her heart out, and since they do not yet know what the situation in the labour movement will be in other countries, of course they are guided by despair. Nor can it be otherwise. It would be ridiculous to expect and foolish to think that capitalist society based on exploitation, could at one stroke create a complete appreciation of the need for socialism and an understanding of it. This cannot be. This appreciation comes only at the end of the struggle which has to be waged in this painful period, in which one revolution has broken out before the rest and gets no assistance from the others, and when famine approaches. Naturally, certain strata of the toilers are inevitably overcome by despair and indignation and turn away in disgust from everything. Naturally, the counter-revolutionaries, the landowners and capitalists, and their protectors and henchmen, take advantage of this situation for the purpose of launching attack after attack upon the socialist government.

We see what this has led to in all the towns where no assistance was given by foreign bayonets. We know that it was possible to defeat the Soviet government only when those people who had shouted so much about defending the fatherland and about their patriotism revealed their capitalist nature and concluded agreements, one day with the German bayonets in order jointly with them to massacre the Ukrainian Bolsheviks, the next day with the Turkish bayonets in order to march against the Bolsheviks, the day after that with the Czechoslovak bayonets in order to overthrow the Soviet government and massacre the Bolsheviks' in Samara. Foreign aid alone, the aid of foreign bayonets alone, the selling out of Russia to Japanese, German and Turkish bayonets alone, have up to now given some show of success to the landowners and to those who have compromised with the capitalists. But we know that when, owing to the famine and the despair of the masses, rebellions of this sort broke out in districts where the aid of foreign bayonets could not be obtained, as was the case in Saratov, Kozlov and Tambov, the rule of the landowners, the capitalists and their friends who camouflaged themselves with the beautiful slogans of the Constituent Assembly lasted not more than days, if not hours. The further the units of the Soviet army were from the centre temporarily occupied by the counter-revolution, the more determined was the movement among the urban workers, the more initiative these workers and peasants displayed in marching to the aid of Saratov, Penza and Kozlov and in immediately overthrowing the rule of the counter-revolution which had been established.

Comrades, if you examine these events from the point of view of all that is taking place in world history, if you bear in mind that your task, our common task, is to explain to ourselves and to explain to the masses that these great disasters have not befallen us accidentally, but first as a result of the imperialist war, and secondly as a result of the furious resistance of the landowners, the capitalists and the exploiters, if we are clear about this we can be certain that, however difficult it may be, the full appreciation of this will spread wider and wider among the masses and we shall succeed in creating discipline, in overcoming the indiscipline in our factories, and in helping the people to

live through this painful and particularly difficult period, which perhaps will last the month or two, the few weeks that still remain until the new harvest.

You know that, as a consequence of the Czechoslovak counter-revolutionary mutiny, which has cut us off from Siberia, as a consequence of the continuous unrest in the South, and as a consequence of the war, the position in Russia today is particularly difficult; but it goes without saying that the more difficult the position of our country in which famine is approaching becomes, the more determined and firm must be the measures that we adopt to combat that famine. One of the principal measures to combat the famine is the establishment of the grain monopoly. In this connection you will know perfectly well from your own experience that the kulaks, the rich, are raising an outcry against the grain monopoly at every step. This can be understood, because in those places where the grain monopoly was temporarily abolished, as Skoropadsky abolished it in Kiev, profiteering reached unprecedented dimensions; there the price of a pood of grain rose to two hundred rubles. Naturally, when there is a shortage of foods without which it is impossible to live, the owners of such goods can become rich, prices rise to unprecedented heights. Naturally, the horror, the panic created by the fear of death from starvation forced prices up to unprecedented heights, and in Kiev they had to think of restoring the monopoly. Here in Russia, long ago, when before the Bolsheviks came to power, notwithstanding the wealth of grain that Russia possessed, the government realised the necessity of introducing the grain monopoly. Only those who are absolutely ignorant, or who have deliberately sold themselves to the interests of the money-bags, can be opposed to it. (*Applause*.)

But, comrades, when we speak of the grain monopoly we must think of the enormous difficulties of realisation that are contained in this phrase. It is quite easy to say "grain monopoly", but we must ponder over what this phrase means. It means that all surplus grain belongs to the state; it means that every single pood of grain over and above that required by the peasant for his farm, to maintain his family and cattle and for sowing, that every extra pood of grain must be taken by the state. How is this to be done? The

state must fix prices; every surplus pood of grain must be found and brought in. How can the peasant, whose mind has been stultified for hundreds of years, who has been robbed and beaten to stupefaction by the landowners and capitalists, who never allowed him to eat his fill, how can this peasant learn to appreciate in a few weeks or a few months what the grain monopoly means? How can millions of people who up to now have known the state only by its oppression, its violence, by the tyranny and robbery of the government officials, how can these peasants, living in remote villages and doomed to ruin, be made to understand that the rule of the workers and peasants means, be made to understand that power is in the hands of the poor, that to hoard grain, possess surplus grain and not hand it over to the state is a crime, and that those who hoard surplus grain are robbers, exploiters, and guilty of causing terrible starvation among the workers of Petrograd, Moscow, etc.? How can the peasant understand these things, considering that up to now he has been kept in ignorance and that the only thing he has been concerned with in the village is to sell his grain? How can he understand these things? It is not surprising that when we examine this question more closely, from the point of view of practical life, we realise what an enormously difficult task it is to introduce a grain monopoly in a country in which tsarism and the landowners held the majority of the peasants in ignorance, in a country in which the peasantry have sown grain on their own land for the first time In many centuries. (*Applause.*)

But the more difficult this task is, the greater it appears to be upon close and careful study, the more clearly must we say to ourselves what we have always said, namely, that the emancipation of the workers must be performed by the workers themselves. We have always said: the emancipation of the working people from oppression cannot be brought from outside; the working people themselves, by their struggle, by their movement, by their agitation, must learn to solve a new historical problem; and the more difficult, the greater, the more responsible the new historical problem is, the larger must be the number of those enlisted for the purpose of taking an independent part in solving it. No class consciousness, no organisation is required to sell grain to

a merchant, to a trader. To do that one must live as the bourgeoisie has ordered. One must merely be an obedient slave and imagine and admit that the world as built by the bourgeoisie is magnificent. But in order to overcome this capitalist chaos, in order to introduce the grain monopoly, in order to ensure that every surplus pood of grain is transferred to the state, there must be prolonged, difficult and strenuous organisational work, not by organisers, not by agitators, but by the masses themselves.

There are such people in the Russian countryside. The majority of the peasants belong to the category of the very poor and poor peasants who are not in a position to trade in grain surpluses and become robbers hoarding perhaps hundreds of poods of grain while others are starving. But today, the situation is that a peasant will perhaps call himself a working peasant (some people like this term very much); but if such a peasant has by his own labour, even without the aid of hired labour, harvested hundreds of poods of grain and calculates that if he keeps this grain he will be able to get more than six rubles, from a profiteer, or from a starving urban worker who has come with his starving family and may offer two hundred rubles a pood—such a peasant, who hoards hundreds of poods of grain in order to raise the price and get even a hundred rubles a pood, cannot be called a working peasant, he becomes transformed into an exploiter, into someone worse than a robber. What must we do under these circumstances? Whom can we rely upon in our struggle? We know that the Soviet revolution and the Soviet government differ from other revolutions and other governments not only because they have overthrown the power of the landowners and the capitalists, not only because they have destroyed the feudal state, the autocracy, but also because the masses have rebelled against all the bureaucrats and created a new state in which power must belong to the workers and peasants—not only must, but already does belong to them. In this state there are no police, no bureaucrats and no standing army kept in barracks for many years, isolated from the people and trained to shoot the people.

We place arms in the hands of the workers and peasants, who must learn the art of war. There are units who give way

to temptation, vice and crime because they are not separated by a Chinese Wall from the world of oppression, from the world of starvation, in which those who have want to enrich themselves out of what they have. That is why very often we see detachments of class-conscious workers leaving Petrograd and Moscow and, on reaching the district to which they have been sent, going astray and becoming criminals. We see the bourgeoisie clapping their hands in delight and filling the columns of their corrupt press with all sorts of bogies to frighten the people. "See what your detachments are like," they say, "what disorder they are creating, how much better our detachments of private capitalists behaved!"

No, thank you, bourgeois gentlemen! You will not frighten us. You know very well that recovery from the misfortunes and ulcers of the capitalist world will not come all at once. And we know that recovery will come only through struggle; we will expose every incident of this kind, not to provide material for the counter-revolutionary Mensheviks and Constitutional-Democrats to smile and gloat over, but in order to teach wider masses of the people. Since our detachments do not fulfil their duties properly, give us more loyal and class-conscious detachments far exceeding the number of those who gave way to temptation. These must be organised and educated; exploited and starving workers who are not class-conscious must be rallied around every class-conscious worker. The rural poor must be roused, educated and shown that the Soviet government will do all it possibly can to help them, so as to carry out the grain monopoly.

And so, when we approached this task, when the Soviet government stated these questions clearly, it said: comrades, workers, organise, rally the food detachments, combat every case in which these detachments show that they are not equal to their duties, organise more strongly and rectify your mistakes, rally the village poor around you. The kulaks know that their last hour has struck, that their enemy is advancing not merely with sermons, words and phrases, but by organising the village poor; and if we succeed in organising the village poor we shall vanquish the kulaks. The kulaks know that the hour of the last, most determined, most desperate battle for socialism is approaching.

This struggle seems to be only a struggle for bread, but as a matter of fact it is a struggle for socialism. If the workers learn to solve these problems independently—no one will come to their aid—if they learn to rally the village poor around them, they will achieve victory, they will have broad and the proper distribution of bread, they will even have the proper distribution of labour, because by distributing labour properly we shall be supreme in all spheres of labour, in all spheres of industry.

Foreseeing all this, the kulaks have made repeated attempts to bribe the poor. They know that grain must be sold to the state at fix rubles per pood, but they sell grain to a poor peasant neighbour at three rubles per pood and say to him: "You can go to a profiteer and sell at forty rubles per pood. We have common interests; we must unite against the state, which is robbing us. It wants to give us six rubles per pood here, take three poods, you can make sixty rubles. You needn't worry about how much I make, that is my business."

I know that on these grounds armed conflicts with the peasants repeatedly occur, while the enemies of the Soviet government gloat over it and snigger, and exert every effort to overthrow the Soviet government. But we say: "That is because the food detachments that were sent were not sufficiently class-conscious; but the larger the detachments were the more frequently we had cases—and this happened repeatedly—when the peasants gave their grain without a single case of violence, because class-conscious workers show that their main strength lies, not in violence, but in the fact that they are the representatives of the organised and enlightened poor, whereas in the rural districts there is a mass of ignorance, the poor are not enlightened. If the latter are approached in an intelligent manner, if they are told in plain language, without bookish words, in a plain human way, that in Petrograd and Moscow and in scores of uyezds people are starving and typhus is spreading as a result of famine, that tens of thousands of Russian peasants and workers are dying of starvation, that it is the rich who have been unjustly hoarding grain and making profit out of the starvation of the people, it will be possible to organise the poor and get the surplus grain collected not

by violence but by the organisation of the village poor. I frequently receive complaints about the kulaks from comrades who have gone to the villages with food detachments and who have fought against the counter-revolution. I will quote an example of which I have a particularly lively recollection because I heard it yesterday, of something that occurred in Yelets Uyezd,[174] In that uyezd a Soviet of Workers' Deputies has been set up, and there are a large number of class-conscious workers and poor peasants there. Thanks to this, it has been possible to consolidate the power of the poor. The first time the representatives of Yelets Uyezd came to report to me I would not believe them, I thought they were boasting. But what they said was confirmed by comrades who had been sent especially from Moscow to other gubernias. They said that the manner in which work had been organised in Yelets was only to be welcomed, and confirmed the fact that in Russia there were uyezds where the Soviets were equal to their tasks and had succeeded in completely removing the kulaks and exploiters from the Soviets, in organising the toilers, in organising the poor, Let those who use their wealth for profit clear out of the Soviet state organisations! (*Applause.*)

After they had expelled the kulaks they went to the town of Yelets, a trading town. They did not wait for a decree to introduce the grain monopoly but remembered that the Soviets represent a government that is close to the people and that every person, if he is a revolutionary, if he is a socialist and is really on the side of the toilers, must act quickly and decisively. They organised all the workers and poor peasants and formed so many detachments that searches were made all over Yelets. They allowed only the trusted and responsible leaders of the detachments to enter the houses. Not a single person of whom they were not certain was allowed to enter the houses, for they knew how often vacillation occurs and that nothing disgraces the Soviet government so much as these cases of robbery committed by unworthy representatives and servants of the Soviet government. They succeeded in collecting a huge quantity of surplus grain and there was not a single house in commercial Yelets in which the bourgeoisie could make any profit by profiteering.

Of course, I know that it is much easier to do this in a small town than in a city like Moscow, but it must not be forgotten that not a single uyezd town possesses the proletarian forces that Moscow has.

In Tambov, recently, the counter-revolution was victorious for several hours. It even published one issue of a Menshevik and Right Socialist-Revolutionary newspaper which called for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, for the overthrow of the Soviet government and declared that the victory of the new government was permanent. But Red Army men and peasants arrived from the surrounding country and in one day overthrew this new "permanent" government, which claimed to be supported by the Constituent Assembly. (*Applause.*)

,The same thing occurred in other uyezds in Tambov Gubernia—a gubernia of enormous size. Its northern uyezds are in the non-agricultural zone, but its southern uyezds are extraordinarily fertile, there they gather very big harvests. Many of the peasants there have surplus grain, and there one must act energetically and have a particularly firm and clear understanding of the situation to be able to gain the support of the poor peasants and overcome the kulaks. There the kulaks are hostile to every sort of workers' and peasants' government and our people have to wait for the assistance of the Petrograd and Moscow workers who, on every occasion, armed with the weapon of organisation, expel the kulaks from the Soviets, organise the poor and jointly with the local peasants acquire experience in fighting for the state monopoly of grain, experience in organising the rural poor and urban toilers in such a way as will guarantee us final and complete victory. I have quoted these examples to illustrate the food situation, comrades, because it seems to me that from the point of view of the working people, for us, for the workers, for the politically conscious proletariat, it is not the statistical estimate of the amount of grain, of how many million poods we can obtain, that matters when one is describing the fight against the kulaks for bread. I leave it to the food supply experts to draw up these statistics. I must say that if we succeed in securing the surplus grain from the gubernias adjacent to the Moscow non-agricultural zone and from fertile Siberia,

even there we could secure enough grain to save the non-agricultural gubernias from starvation during the few critical weeks that remain until the harvest. In order to do that we must organise a still larger number of class-conscious, advanced workers. This was the main lesson to be learned from all preceding revolutions, and it is the main lesson to be learned from our revolution. The better we are organised, the more widely organisation manifests itself, the more the workers in the factories realise that their strength lies entirely in their organisation and that of the village poor, the more will our victory in the struggle against famine and in the struggle for socialism be assured. For, I repeat, our task is not to invent a new form of government but to rouse, to educate and to organise every representative of the village poor, even in the remotest villages, to independent activity. It will not be difficult for a few class-conscious urban workers, Petrograd and Moscow workers, to explain, even in remote villages, that it is wrong to hoard grain, to profiteer in grain, to use it for making vodka, when hundreds of thousands are dying in Moscow. In order to do that, the workers of Petrograd and Moscow, and particularly you, comrades, the representatives of the most varied trades, factories and works, must thoroughly understand that no one will come to your assistance, that from other classes you can expect not assistants but enemies, that the Soviet government has no loyal intelligentsia at its service. The intelligentsia are using their experience and knowledge—the highest human achievement—in the service of the exploiters, and are doing all they can to prevent our gaining victory over the exploiters; their efforts will cause the death of hundreds of thousands from starvation, but that will not break the resistance of the toilers. We have no one to depend upon but the class with which we achieved the revolution and with which we shall overcome the greatest difficulties, cross the very difficult zone that lies ahead of us—and that is the factory workers, the urban and rural proletariat, who speak to each other in a language they all understand, who in town and country will vanquish all our enemies—the kulaks and the rich.

But in order to achieve this we must remember the fundamental postulate of the socialist revolution which the

workers so often forget, and that is, that in order to make a socialist revolution, in order to bring it about, in order to liberate the people from oppression, it is not necessary immediately to abolish classes; the most class-conscious and organised workers must take power in their hands. The workers must become the ruling class in the state. That is the truth which the majority of you have read in *The Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, which was written more than seventy years ago, and which has been translated into all languages and circulated in all countries. Everywhere the truth has been revealed that in order to vanquish the capitalists it is necessary during the struggle against exploitation, while ignorance is rife, while people do not yet believe in the new system, that the organised urban factory workers become the ruling class. When you gather together in your factory committees to settle your affairs, remember that the revolution will not be able to retain a single one of its gains if you, in your factory committees, merely concern yourselves with workers' technical or purely financial interests. The workers and the oppressed classes have managed to seize power more than once, but never have they been able to retain it. To do this the workers must be able not only to rise in heroic struggle and overthrow exploitation; they must also be able to organise, to maintain discipline, to be staunch, to discuss affairs calmly when everything is tottering, when you are being attacked, when innumerable stupid rumours are being spread—it is at such a time that the factory committees, which in all things are closely connected with the vast masses, are faced with the great political task of becoming primarily an organ of administration of political life. The fundamental political problem that faces the Soviet government is that of securing the proper distribution of grain. Although Yelets succeeded in bridling the local bourgeoisie, it is much more difficult to do this in Moscow; but here we have incomparably better organisation, and here you can easily find tens of thousands of honest people whom your parties and your trade unions will supply and answer for, who will be able to lead the detachments and guarantee that they will remain ideologically loyal in spite of all difficulties, in spite of all temptations and in spite of the torments of hunger. No other class could

undertake this task at the present time, no other class would be able to lead the people who often fall into despair; there is no other class but the urban factory proletariat that can do this. Your factory committees must cease to be merely factory committees, they must become the fundamental state nuclei of the ruling class. (*Applause.*) Your organisation, your solidarity, your energy will determine whether we shall hold out in this severe transitional period as staunchly as a Soviet government should hold out. Take up this work yourselves, take it up from every side, expose abuses every day. Rectify every mistake that is committed with your own experience—many mistakes are committed today because the working class is still inexperienced, but the important thing is that it should itself take up this work and rectify its own mistakes. If we act in this way, if every committee understands that it is one of the leaders of the greatest revolution in the world—then we shall achieve socialism for the whole world! (*Applause culminating in an ovation.*)

2

REPLY TO THE DEBATE ON THE CURRENT SITUATION JUNE 28, 1918

Comrades, permit me first of all to deal with a few of the propositions advanced in opposition to me by Paderin, who delivered the second report. From the shorthand report I note that he said: "We must do everything possible to enable primarily the British and German proletariat to rise against their oppressors. What must be done to bring this about? Is it our business to help these oppressors? By rousing enmity among ourselves, by destroying and weakening the country, we infinitely strengthen the position of the imperialists, British, French and German, who in the end will unite in order to strangle the working class of Russia." This argument shows how irresolute the Mensheviks have always been in their struggle against and in their opposition to imperialist war, because the argument I have just quoted can only be understood as coming from the lips of a man who calls himself a defencist, who takes up a completely imperialist position (*applause*), of a man who justifies imperialist war and who repeats the bourgeois lie that in such a war the workers defend their fatherland. If, indeed, one adopts the point of view that the workers must not destroy and weaken the country during such a war, it is tantamount to calling upon the workers to defend the fatherland in an imperialist war. And you know what the Bolshevik Government, which considered it its first duty to publish, to expose and to pillory the secret treaties, has done. You know that the Allies waged war for the sake of the secret treaties, and that the Kerensky government, which existed with the aid

and support of the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, not only did not annul the secret treaties, but did not even publish them; you know that the Russian people waged war for the sake of these secret treaties, which promised the Russian landowners and capitalists, in the event of victory, Constantinople, the Dardanelles, Lvov, Galicia and Armenia. If we adopt the point of view of the working class, if we are opposed to the war, how could we tolerate these secret treaties? As long as we tolerated the secret treaties, as long as we tolerated the rule of the bourgeoisie in Russia, we fostered the chauvinistic conviction in the minds of the German workers that there were no class-conscious workers in Russia, that everyone in Russia supported imperialism, and that Russia was pursuing a war for the purpose of plundering Austria and Turkey. But the very opposite is the case. The workers' and peasants' government has done more than any other government in the world to weaken the German imperialists, to tear the German workers away from them, because when the secret treaties were published and exposed to the world, even the German chauvinists, even the German defencists, even those workers who supported their government, had to admit in their newspaper *Vorwarts*,[175] their central organ, that "this is an act of a socialist government, a genuinely revolutionary act". They had to admit this because not a single imperialist government involved in the war did this; ours was the only government that denounced the secret treaties.

Of course at the back of every German worker's mind, no matter how cowed, downtrodden or bribed by the imperialists he may be, there is the thought: "Has not our government secret treaties?" (*A voice*: "Tell us about the Black Sea fleet.") All right, I will tell you about it, although it has nothing to do with the subject. At the back of every German worker's mind there is the thought: "If the Russian workers have gone to the length of denouncing the secret treaties, has not the German Government secret treaties?" When the Brest negotiations began, Comrade Trotsky's exposures reached the whole world. Did not this policy rouse in an enemy country engaged in a terrible imperialist war with other governments, not anger but the sympathy of the masses of the people? The only government to do that was our

government. Our revolution succeeded in rousing a great revolutionary movement during wartime in an enemy country merely by the fact that we denounced the secret treaties by the fact that we said; "We will not be deterred by any danger." If we know, if we say, and not merely say, but mean it, that international revolution is the only salvation from world war, from the imperialist massacre of the people, then we in our revolution must pursue that aim, notwithstanding all difficulties and all dangers. And when we took this path, for the first time in history, in Germany, in the most imperialistic and most disciplined country, in the midst of war, a mass strike broke out and flared up in January. Of course there are people who believe that revolution can break out in a foreign country to order, by agreement. These people are either mad or they are provocateurs. We have experienced two revolutions during the past twelve years. We know that revolutions cannot be made to order, or by agreement; they break out when tens of millions of people come to the conclusion that it is impossible to live in the old way any longer. We know what difficulties accompanied the birth of the revolution in 1905 and in 1917, and we never expected revolution to break out in other countries at one stroke, as a result of a single appeal. The revolution now beginning to grow in Germany and in Austria in a tribute to the great service rendered by the Russian October Revolution. (*Applause.*) We read in the newspapers today that in Vienna, where the bread ration is smaller than ours, where the plunder of the Ukraine can bring no relief, where the population says that it has never before experienced such horrors of starvation, an *Arbeiterrat* has sprung up. In Vienna general strikes are breaking out again.

And we say to ourselves: This is the second step, this is the second proof that when the Russian workers denounced the imperialist secret treaties, when they expelled their bourgeoisie, they acted as consistent class-conscious worker internationalists, they facilitated the growth of the revolution in Germany and in Austria in a way that no other revolution in the world has ever done in a hostile country which was in a state of war, and in which bitter feeling ran high.

To forecast when a revolution will mature, to promise that it will come tomorrow, would be deceiving you. You

remember, particularly those of you who experienced both Russian revolutions, that no one in November 1904 could guarantee that within two months a hundred thousand St. Petersburg workers would march to the Winter Palace and start a great revolution.

Recall December 1916. How could we guarantee that two months later the tsarist monarchy would be overthrown in the course of a few days? We in this country, which has experienced two revolutions, know and realise that the progress of the revolution cannot be foretold, and that revolution cannot be called forth. We can only work for the revolution. If you work consistently, if you work devotedly, if this work is linked up with the interests of the oppressed masses, who make up the majority, revolution will come; but where, how, at what moment, from what immediate cause, cannot be foretold. That is why we shall never take the liberty of deceiving the masses by saying: "The German workers will help us tomorrow, they will blow up their Kaiser the day after tomorrow." We have no right to say such things.

Our position is made more difficult by the fact that the Russian revolution proved to be ahead of other revolutions; but the fact that we are not alone is proved by the news that reaches us nearly every day that the best German Social-Democrats are expressing themselves in favour of the Bolsheviks, that the Bolsheviks are being supported in the open German press by Clara Zetkin and also by Franz Mehring, who in a series of articles has been showing the German workers that the Bolsheviks alone have properly understood what socialism is. Recently a Social-Democrat named Hoschka definitely stated in the Württemberg Landtag that he regarded the Bolsheviks alone as models of consistency in the pursuit of a correct revolutionary policy. Do you think that such statements do not find an echo among scores, hundreds and thousands of German workers who associate themselves with these statements almost before they are uttered? When affairs in Germany and Austria have reached the stage of the formation of *Arbeiterräte* and of a second mass strike, we can say without the least exaggeration, without the least self-deception, that this marks the beginning of a revolution. We say very

definitely: Our policy and our path have been a correct policy and a correct path; we have helped the Austrian and the German workers to regard themselves, not as enemies strangling the Russian workers in the interests of the Kaiser, in the interests of the German capitalists, but as brothers of the Russian workers, who are performing the same revolutionary work as they are. (*Applause.*)

I would also like to mention a passage in Paderin's speech which, in my opinion, deserves attention, the more so that it partly coincides with the idea expressed by the preceding speaker.[176] This is the passage: "We now see that civil war is being waged within the working class. Can we permit this to go on?" You see that civil war is described as war within the working class or as war against the peasants, as the preceding speaker described it. We know perfectly well that both descriptions are wrong. The civil war in Russia is a war waged by the workers and the poor peasants against the landowners and the capitalists. This war is being prolonged and protracted because the Russian landowners and capitalists were vanquished in October and November with relatively small losses, were vanquished by the enthusiasm of the masses of the people under conditions in which it became immediately clear to them that the people would not support them. Things reached the stage that even in the Don region, where there is the largest number of rich Cossacks who live by exploiting wage labour, where the hopes of the counter-revolution were brightest, even there, Bogayevsky, the leader of the counter-revolutionary rebellion, had to admit and publicly admitted: "Ours is a lost cause because even in our region the majority of the population are on the side of the Bolsheviks." (*Applause.*)

That was the position, that was how the landowners and capitalists lost their counter-revolutionary game in October and November.

That was the result of their reckless attempt to organise the officer cadets, the officers, the sons of landowners and capitalists, into a White Guard to fight the workers' and peasants' revolution. And now—if you don't know this read today's newspapers—the Czechoslovak adventurers are operating with the financial assistance of the Anglo-French capitalists,[177] who are bribing troops to drag us into the

war again. Haven't you read that the Czechoslovaks said in Samara? They said: "We shall join Dutov and Semyonov and compel the workers of Russia and the Russian people, once again to fight against Germany side by side with Britain and France. We shall restore those secret treaties and fling you once again, for another four years perhaps, into this imperialist war in alliance with the bourgeoisie." But instead of that we are now waging war against our bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie of other countries, and it is solely due to the fact that we are waging this war that we have won the sympathy and support of the workers of other countries. If the workers of one belligerent country see that in the other belligerent country close connections are being established between the workers and the bourgeoisie it splits the workers up according to nation and unites them with their respective bourgeoisie. This is a great evil, it means the collapse of the socialist revolution, it means the collapse and doom of the whole International. (*Applause*.)

In 1914 the International was wrecked because the workers of all countries united with the bourgeoisie in their respective countries and split their own ranks. Now, this split is being healed. Perhaps you have read that in Britain recently the Scottish schoolteacher and trade unionist MacLean was sentenced for a second time, to five years' imprisonment—the first time he was sentenced to eighteen months—for exposing the real objects of the war and speaking about the criminal nature of British imperialism.. When he was released there was already a representative of the Soviet Government in Britain, Litvinov, who immediately appointed MacLean Consul, a representative of the Soviet Russian Federative Republic in Britain, and the Scottish workers greeted this appointment with enthusiasm. The British Government has again started persecuting MacLean and this time not only as a Scottish schoolteacher, but also as Consul of the Federative Soviet Republic. MacLean is in prison because he acted openly as the representative of our government; we have never seen this man, he is the beloved leader of the Scottish workers, he has never belonged to our Party, but we joined with him; the Russian and Scottish workers united against the British Government in spite of the fact that the latter buys Czechoslovaks and

is manoeuvring frantically to drag the Russian Republic into the war. This is proof that in all countries, irrespective of their position in the war—in Germany which is fighting against us, in Britain which is trying to grab Baghdad and strangle Turkey—the workers are uniting with the Russian Bolsheviks, with the Russian Bolshevik revolution. The speaker whose words I have quoted said that workers and peasants are waging a civil war against workers and peasants; we know perfectly well that this is not true. The working class is one thing; groups, small strata of the working class are another thing. From 1871 to 1914, for almost half a century, the German working class was a model of socialist organisation for the whole world. We know that it had a party with a membership of a million, that it created trade unions with a membership of two, three and four millions; nevertheless, in the course of this half-century hundreds of thousands of German workers remained united in Christian trade unions, which stood staunchly for the priests, for the church and for the Kaiser. Who were the real representatives of the working class? Was it the huge German Social-Democratic Party and the trade unions, or the hundreds of thousands of church-going workers? The working class, which comprises the overwhelming majority of the class-conscious, advanced, thinking workers, is one thing, while a single factory, a single district, a few groups of workers who still remain on the side of the bourgeoisie are another thing.

The overwhelming majority of the working class of Russia—this is shown by all the elections to the Soviets, the factory committees and conferences—ninety-nine per cent of them are on the side of the Soviet government (*applause*), knowing that this government is waging war against the bourgeoisie, against the kulaks, and not against the peasants and workers. It is quite a different matter that there is an insignificant group of workers still in slavish dependence upon the bourgeoisie. We are not waging war against them but against the bourgeoisie. If those insignificant groups which are still in alliance with the bourgeoisie get hurt in the process they have only themselves to blame. (*Applause.*)

A question has been sent to me in writing; it reads as follows: "Why are counter-revolutionary newspapers still

published?" One of the reasons is that there are elements among the printers who are bribed by the bourgeoisie.[178] (Commotion, shouts: "It's not true.") You can shout as much as you like, but you will not prevent me from telling the truth, which all the workers know and which I have just begun to explain. When a worker attaches great importance to the wages he gets for working for the bourgeois press, when he says: "I want to keep my high wages by helping the bourgeoisie to sell poison, to poison the minds of the people," then I say it is as if these workers were bribed by the bourgeoisie (applause), not in the sense that any individual person was hired, but in the sense in which all Marxists have spoken about the British workers who ally themselves with their capitalists. All of you who have read trade union literature know that there are not only trade unions in Britain, but also alliances between the workers and capitalists in a particular industry for the purpose of raising prices and of robbing everybody else. All Marxists, all socialists of all countries point the finger of scorn at these cases and, beginning with Marx and Engels, say that there are workers who, owing to their ignorance and pursuit of their craft interests, allow themselves to be bribed by the bourgeoisie. They have sold their birthright, their right to the socialist revolution, by entering into an alliance with their capitalists against the overwhelming majority of the workers and the oppressed toilers in their own country, against their own class. The same thing is happening here. When certain groups of workers say, the fact that the stuff we print is opium, poison, spreads lies and provocation, has nothing to do with us, we get high wages and we don't care a hang for anybody else —we will denounce such workers. In our literature we have always said openly: "Such workers are abandoning the working class and deserting to the side of the bourgeoisie." (*Applause.*)

Comrades, I will in a moment deal with the questions that have been put to me; but first of all, so as not to forget, I will reply to the question about the Black Sea fleet,[179] which seems to have been put for the purpose of exposing us. Let me tell you that the man who was operating there was Comrade Raskolnikov, whom the Moscow and Petrograd workers know very well because of the agitation and Party

work he has carried on. Comrade Raskolnikov himself will be here and he will tell you how he agitated in favour of destroying the fleet rather than allow the German troops to use it for the purpose of attacking Novorossiisk. That was the situation in regard to the Black Sea fleet; and the People's Commissars Stalin, Shlyapnikov and Raskolnikov will arrive in Moscow soon and tell us all about it. You will see then that ours was the only possible policy; like the Brest peace policy, it caused us many misfortunes but it enabled the Soviet government and the workers' socialist revolution to hold their banner aloft before the workers of all countries. If the number of workers in Germany who are abandoning the old prejudices about the Bolsheviks, and who understand that our policy is correct, is growing day by day it is due to the tactics we have been pursuing since the Brest Treaty.

Of the questions that have been sent up to me I will deal with the two concerning the transportation of grain. Certain workers ask: "Why do you prohibit individual workers from bringing grain into the town when it is for the use of their own families?" The reply is a simple one. Just think what would happen if the thousands of poods that are necessary for a given locality, for a given factory, for a given district, or for a given street were carried by thousands of people. If we allowed this, the food supply organisations would begin to break down entirely. We do not blame the man who, tormented by hunger, travels into the country to get grain and procures it in whatever way he can, but we say: "We do not exist as a workers' and peasants' government for the purpose of legalising and encouraging disintegration and ruin." A government is not required for this purpose. It is required for the purpose of uniting and organising the class-conscious in order to combat lack of class consciousness. We cannot blame those who owing to their lack of class consciousness throw up everything, close their eyes to everything, and try to save themselves by procuring grain in whatever way they can, but we can blame Party people who, while advocating the grain monopoly, do not sufficiently foster class consciousness and solidarity in action. Yes, the struggle against the bag-trader, against the private transportation of grain is a very difficult one be-

cause it is a struggle against ignorance, against lack of class consciousness, against the lack of organisation of the broad masses; but we shall never abandon this struggle. Every time people try to collect grain on their own, we shall call for proletarian socialist methods of combating famine: having united together, let us replace the sick food detachments by new forces, by fresher, stronger, more honest, more class-conscious and tried men, and we shall collect the same amount of grain, the same thousands of poods that are collected individually by two hundred persons, each carrying fifteen poods, each raising prices and increasing profiteering. We shall unite these two hundred persons, we shall create a strong, compact workers' army. If we do not succeed in doing this at the first attempt we shall repeat our efforts; we shall try to induce the class-conscious workers in every factory to delegate larger numbers of more reliable people for the purpose of combating profiteering, and we are sure that the class consciousness, discipline and organisation of the workers will in the last resort withstand all severe trials. When people are convinced by their own experience that individual bag-traders cannot help to save hundreds of thousands from starvation we shall see the victory of the cause of organisation and class consciousness, and by united action we shall organise the fight against famine and secure the proper distribution of grain.

I am asked: "Why is not a monopoly introduced on manufactured goods, which are as necessary as grain?" My reply is: "The Soviet government is adopting all measures to this end." You know that there is a tendency to organise, to amalgamate the textile factories, the textile industry. You know that the majority of the people in the leading bodies of this organisation are workers, you know that the Soviet government is preparing to nationalise all branches of industry; you know that the difficulties that confront us in this matter are enormous, and that much effort will be required to do all this in an organised manner. We are not setting to work on this task in the way governments which rely on bureaucrats do. It is quite easy to manage affairs in that way: let one man receive 400 rubles per month; let another get more, a thousand rubles per month—our busi-

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

ness is to give orders and the others must obey. That is how all bourgeois countries are administered; they hire officials at high salaries, they hire the sons of the bourgeoisie and entrust the administration to them. The Soviet Republic cannot be administered in this way. We have no officials to manage and guide the work of amalgamating all the textile factories, of registering all their property and stocks, of introducing a monopoly of all articles of primary necessity, and of properly distributing them. We call upon the workers to do this work; we call upon the representatives of the Textile Workers' Union and say to them: "You must form the majority on the collegium of the Central Textile Board, and you are the majority on it, in the same way as you are the majority on the collegiums of the Supreme Economic Council. Comrades, workers, take up this very important State task yourselves. We know that it is much more difficult than appointing efficient officials, but we know also that there is no other way of doing it." Power must be placed in the hands of the working class, and the advanced workers must, in spite of all difficulties, learn by their own bitter experience, by their own efforts, by the work of their own hands, how all articles, all textile goods, should be distributed in the interests of the toilers. (*Applause.*)

Hence, the Soviet government is doing all it possibly can in the present circumstances to introduce a state monopoly and to fix prices. It is doing it through the medium of the workers, in conjunction with the workers; it gives them the majority on the management boards, and in every leading centre, as, for example, the Supreme Economic Council or the amalgamated metalworks, or the amalgamated sugar refineries, which were nationalised in a few weeks. This is a difficult road, but, I repeat, we cannot avoid difficulties in the task of getting the workers to adopt a new position, workers who have been accustomed and have been trained by the bourgeoisie for hundreds of years merely to carry out its orders slavishly, to work like convicts, of making them feel that they are the government. We are the owners of industry, we are the owners of the grain, we are the owners of all the wealth of the country. Only when this has deeply penetrated the minds of the working class, when, by their own experience, by their own

efforts, they increase their forces tenfold, will all the difficulties of the socialist revolution be overcome.

I conclude by once again appealing to this factory committee conference. In the city of Moscow the difficulties are particularly great because it is an enormous centre of trade and speculation in which, for many years, tens of thousands of people have obtained their livelihood by trade and speculation. Here the difficulties are particularly great, but here there are forces that no small town in the country possesses. Let the workers' organisations, let the factory committees remember and take firm note of what present events and the famine that has descended upon the toilers of Russia teach. New organisations, broader organisations of class-conscious and advanced workers alone can save the revolution and prevent the restoration of the rule of the landowners and capitalists. Such workers are now in the majority, but it is not enough; they must take a greater part in general state work. In Moscow we have hosts of cases of profiteers gambling on the famine, making profit out of the famine, breaking the state grain monopoly, of the rich having everything they desire. In Moscow there are 8,000 members of the Communist Party. In Moscow the trade unions can delegate 20,000 to 30,000 men and women whom they can vouch for, who will be reliable and staunch exponents of proletarian policy. Unite them, create hundreds of thousands of detachments, tackle the food problem, search the whole of the rich population, and you will secure what you need. (*Applause.*)

In my report I told you what successes were achieved in this sphere in the town of Yelets; but it is more difficult to achieve this in Moscow. I said that Yelets was a well-organised town. There are many towns that are much less organised because this is a very difficult matter, because it is not a matter of a shortage of arms—we have any amount of them—the difficulty lies in appointing hundreds and thousands of completely reliable workers to responsible administration posts, workers who understand that they are not working in their local cause but in the cause of the whole of Russia, who are capable of sticking at their posts as representatives of the whole class, of organising the work according to a definite and systematic plan, of carrying out orders, of carrying out the decisions of the Moscow Soviet, of the Moscow organisa-

tions representing the whole of proletarian Moscow. The whole difficulty lies in organising the proletariat, in training it to become more class-conscious than it has been up to now. Look at the Petrograd elections.[180] You will see that although famine is raging there even worse than in Moscow and still greater misfortunes have befallen it, the loyalty to the workers' revolution is growing, organisation and solidarity are increasing, and you will say to yourselves: the disasters that have befallen us are multiplying but the determination of the working class to overcome all these difficulties is multiplying also. Take this path, increase your efforts, put thousands of new detachments on this path to help to solve the food problem, and together with you, relying on your support, we will overcome the famine and secure proper distribution. (*Applause*.)

3

RESOLUTION ON THE REPORT ON THE CURRENT SITUATION

The Fourth Moscow Conference of Factory Committees wholeheartedly supports the Soviet government's food policy and particularly approves (and insists that it should be supported by all workers) the policy of uniting the rural poor.

The liberation of the workers can be achieved only by the workers' own efforts, and only the closest alliance between the urban workers and the rural poor can overcome the resistance of the bourgeoisie and the kulaks, bring all surpluses of grain into their hands and achieve proper distribution among those in need both in town and country.

The Conference calls on all factory committees to exert every effort to organise broader sections of the workers in food detachments and to send them under the leadership of the most reliable comrades to give all-round support to the food policy of the workers' and peasants' government.

SPEECH AT A PUBLIC MEETING IN SIMONOVSKY SUB-DISTRICT JUNE 28, 1918[181]

BRIEF NEWSPAPER REPORT

(T*he workers gave Lenin a rousing welcome.*) Lenin spoke of the necessity of civil war and called upon the Moscow proletariat to organise solidly in the struggle both against the forces of counter-revolution and against famine and disruption.

He touched in passing on the Saratov and Tambov events, and pointed out that wherever revolts inspired by the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries broke out, the working class rapidly became disillusioned with the views of these parties and no less rapidly overthrew the usurpers of the power of the workers and peasants.

We would receive telegrams, he said, appealing for aid, but before our troops could get half-way, the workers who had sent the appeal would inform us that the need for immediate assistance had passed as the usurpers had been defeated by local forces. Such was the case in Saratov, Tambov and other cities.

Lenin stated that, in general, war ran counter to the aims of the Communist Party. But the war that was being preached today was a sacred war; it was a civil war, a war of the working class against its exploiters.

Without effort, without tremendous expenditure of energy, he said, we should never set foot on the road to socialism. A successful fight for the ideals of the working class entailed organisation. Organisation was also needed to consolidate the gains we had won at the cost of such severe sacrifice and effort.

It was harder to retain power than to seize it, and we knew of many cases in history when the working class had taken power into its hands but had been unable to retain it merely because it did not possess strong enough organisations.

The people were worn out, Lenin continued, and they might, of course, be driven to any folly, even to the acceptance of a Skoropadsky; for, in their mass, the people were ignorant.

Famine was imminent, but we knew that there was grain enough even without Siberia, the Caucasus and the Ukraine. There was enough grain in the provinces surrounding Moscow and Petrograd to last us until the new harvest, but it was all hidden away by the kulaks. We must organise the poor peasants, so as to get this grain with their help. A ruthless struggle with words, as well as action, must be waged on profiteering and profiteers.

Only the working class, knit together by organisation, could explain to the common people the need for war on the kulaks. The Russian people must know that the poor peasantry had a powerful ally in the shape of the organised urban proletariat.

The working class and the peasantry must not place too much hope in the intelligentsia, as many of the intellectuals beginning to side with us were expecting our downfall any moment.

Lenin concluded with an appeal to organise for the struggle of the workers and peasants against the kulaks, the landowners and the bourgeoisie. (*Lenin's speech ended amid a general ovation.*)

Izvestia VTsIK No. 133,
June 29, 1918

Published according to
the *Izvestia* text

PROPHETIC WORDS

Nobody, thank God, believes in miracles nowadays. Miraculous prophecy is a fairy-tale. But scientific prophecy is a fact. And in these days, when we so very often encounter shameful despondency and even despair around us, it is useful to recall one scientific prophecy which has come true.

Frederick Engels had occasion in 1887 to write of the coming world war in a preface to a pamphlet by Sigismund Borkheim, *In Memory of the German Arch-Patriots of 1806-1807* (*Zur Erinnerung für die deutschen Mordspatrioten 1806-1807*). (This pamphlet is No. XXIV of the Social-Democratic Library published in Göttingen-Zürich in 1888.)

This is how Frederick Engels spoke over thirty years ago of the future world war:

"...No war is any longer possible for Prussia-Germany except a world war and a world war indeed of an extent and violence hitherto undreamt of. Eight to ten millions of soldiers will massacre one another and in doing so devour the whole of Europe until they have stripped it barer than any swarm of locusts has ever done. The devastations of the Thirty Years' War compressed into three or four years, and spread over the whole Continent; famine, pestilence, general demoralisation both of the armies and of the mass of the people produced by acute distress; hopeless confusion of our artificial machinery in trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional state wisdom to such an extent that crowns will roll by dozens on the pavement and there will be nobody to pick them up; absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end and who will come out of the struggle as victor; only one result is absolutely certain: general exhaustion

and the establishment of the conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class.

"This is the prospect when the system of mutual outbidding in armaments, taken to the final extreme, at last bears its inevitable fruits. This, my lords, princes and statesmen, is where in your wisdom you have brought old Europe. And when nothing more remains to you but to open the last great war dance—that will suit us all right (*uns kann es recht sein*). The war may perhaps push us temporarily into the background, may wrench from us many a position already conquered. But when you have unfettered forces which you will then no longer be able again to control, things may go as they will: at the end of the tragedy you will be ruined and the victory of the proletariat will either be already achieved or at any rate (*doch*) inevitable.

"London, December 15, 1887 *Frederick Engels*"[182]

What genius is displayed in this prophecy! And how infinitely rich in ideas is every sentence of this exact, clear, brief and scientific class analysis! How much could be learnt from it by those who are now shamefully succumbing to lack of faith, despondency and despair, if ... if people who are accustomed to kowtow to the bourgeoisie, or who allow themselves to be frightened by it, could but think, were but capable of thinking!

Some of Engels's predictions have turned out differently; and one could not expect the world and capitalism to have remained unchanged during thirty years of frenzied imperialist development. But what is most astonishing is that so many of Engels's predictions are turning out "to the letter". For Engels gave a perfectly exact class analysis, and classes and the relations between them have remained unchanged.

"...The war may perhaps push us temporarily into the background...." Developments have proceeded exactly along these lines, but have gone even further and even worse: some of the social-chauvinists who have been "pushed back", and their spineless "semi-opponents", the Kautskyites, have begun to extol their backward movement and have become direct traitors to and betrayers of socialism.

"...The war may perhaps wrench from us many a position already conquered...." A number of "legal" positions have

been wrenched from the working class. But on the other hand it has been steeled by trials and is receiving severe but salutary lessons in illegal organisation, in illegal struggle and in preparing its forces for a revolutionary attack.

"...Crowns will roll by dozens...." Several crowns have already fallen. And one of them is worth dozens of others—the crown of the autocrat of all the Russias, Nicholas Romanov.

"...Absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end...." After four years of war this absolute impossibility has, if one may say so, become even more absolute.

"...Hopeless confusion of our artificial machinery in trade, industry and credit...." At the end of the fourth year of war this has been fully borne out in the case of one of the biggest and most backward of the states drawn into the war by the capitalists—Russia. But do not the growing starvation in Germany and Austria, the shortage of clothing and raw material and the wearing out of the means of production show that a similar state of affairs is very rapidly overtaking other countries as well?

Engels depicts the consequences brought about only by "foreign" war; he does not deal with internal, i.e., civil war, without which not one of the great revolutions of history has taken place, and without which not a single serious Marxist has conceived the transition from capitalism to socialism. And while a foreign war may drag on for a certain time without causing "hopeless confusion" in the "artificial machinery" of capitalism, it is obvious that a civil war without such a consequence is quite inconceivable.

What stupidity, what spinelessness—not to say mercenary service to the bourgeoisie—is displayed by those who, like our *Novaya Zhizn* group, Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., while continuing to call themselves "socialists", maliciously point to the manifestation of this "hopeless confusion" and lay the blame for everything on the revolutionary proletariat, the Soviet power, the "utopia" of the transition to socialism. The "confusion", or *razrukha*,* to use the excellent Russian word, has been brought about by the war'. There can be no severe war without dis-

* Dislocation, disruption.—*Ed.*

ruption. There can be no civil war—the inevitable condition and concomitant of socialist revolution—without disruption. To renounce revolution and socialism "in view of" the disruption, only means to display one's lack of principle and in practice to desert to the bourgeoisie.

"...Famine, pestilence, general demoralisation both of the armies and of the mass of the people produced by acute distress...."

How simply and clearly Engels draws this indisputable conclusion, which must be obvious to everyone who is at all capable of reflecting on the objective consequences of many years of severe and agonising war. And how astonishingly stupid are these numerous "Social-Democrats" and pseudo-Socialists who will not or cannot realise this most simple idea.

Is it conceivable that a war can last many years without both the armies and the mass of the people becoming *demoralised*? Of course not. Such a consequence of a long war is absolutely inevitable over a period of several years, if not a whole generation. And our "men in mufflers", the bourgeois intellectual snivelers who call themselves "Social-Democrats" and "Socialists", second the bourgeoisie in blaming the revolution for the manifestations of demoralisation or for the inevitable severity of the measures taken to combat particularly acute cases of demoralisation—although it is as clear as noonday that this demoralisation has been produced by the imperialist war, and that no revolution can rid itself of *such* consequences of war without a long struggle and without a number of stern measures of repression.

Our sugary writers in *Novaya Zhizn*, *Vperyod* or *Dyelo Naroda* are prepared to grant a revolution of the proletariat and other oppressed classes "theoretically", provided only that the revolution drops from heaven and is not born and bred on earth soaked in the blood of four years of imperialist butchery of the peoples, with millions upon millions of people exhausted, tormented and demoralised by this butchery.

They had heard and admitted "in theory" that a revolution should be compared to an act of childbirth; but when it came to the point, they disgracefully took fright and

their fainthearted whimperings echoed the malicious outbursts of the bourgeoisie against the insurrection of the proletariat. Consider the descriptions of childbirth given in literature, when the authors aim at presenting a truthful picture of the severity, pain and horror of the act of travail, as in Emile Zola's *La joie de vivre* (The Joy of Life), for instance, or in Veresayev's *Notes of a Doctor*. Human childbirth is an act which transforms the woman into an almost lifeless, bloodstained heap of flesh, tortured, tormented and driven frantic by pain. But can the "individual" that sees *only* this in love and its sequel, in the transformation of the woman into a mother, be regarded as a human being? Who would renounce love and procreation for *this* reason?

Travail may be light or severe. Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, always said that the transition from capitalism to socialism would be inevitably accompanied *by prolonged birth pangs*. And analysing the consequences of a world war, Engels outlines simply and clearly the indisputable and obvious fact that a revolution that follows and is connected with a war (and still more—let us add for our part—a revolution which breaks out during a war, and which is obliged to grow and maintain itself in the midst of a world war) is a *particularly severe* case of childbirth.

Clearly realising this, Engels speaks with great caution of socialism being brought to birth by a capitalist society which is perishing in a world war. "Only one result [of a world war]," he says, "is absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the *establishment* of the conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class."

This thought is expressed even more clearly at the end of the preface we are examining.

"...At the end of the tragedy you (the capitalists and landowners, the kings and statesmen of the bourgeoisie) will be ruined and the victory of the proletariat will either be already achieved or at any rate inevitable."

Severe travail greatly increases the danger of grave illness or of a fatal issue. But while individuals may die in the act of childbirth, the new society to which the old system gives birth cannot die; all that may happen is that the

birth may be more painful, more prolonged, and growth and development slower.

The war has not yet ended. General exhaustion has already set in. As regards the two *direct* results of war predicted by Engels conditionally (either the victory of the working class already achieved, or the establishment of conditions which will make this inevitable, *despite all difficulties*), as regards these two conditions, now, in the middle of 1918, we find *both* in evidence.

In one, the least developed, of the capitalist countries, the victory of the working class *is already achieved*. In the others, with unparalleled pain and effort, the conditions are being established which will make this victory "at any rate inevitable".

Let the "socialist" snivelers croak, let the bourgeoisie rage and fume, but only people who shut their eyes so as not to see, and stuff their ears so as not to hear, can fail to notice that all over the world the birth pangs of the old, capitalist society, which is pregnant with socialism, have begun. Our country, which has temporarily been advanced by the march of events to the van of the socialist revolution, is undergoing the particularly severe pains of the first period of travail. We have every reason to face the future with complete assurance and absolute confidence, for it is preparing for us new allies and new victories of the socialist revolution in a number of the more advanced countries. We are entitled to be proud and to consider ourselves fortunate that it has come to our lot to be the first to fell in one part of the globe that wild beast, capitalism, which has drenched the earth in blood, which has reduced humanity to starvation and demoralisation, and which will assuredly perish soon, no matter how monstrous and savage its frenzy in the face of death.

June 29, 1918

Pravda No. 133,
July 2, 1918
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to
the *Pravda* text

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A MEETING IN THE ALEXEYEVSKY RIDING SCHOOL[183] JULY 2, 1918

BRIEF NEWSPAPER REPORT

Lenin pointed out that the army, like the means of production, had formerly been an instrument of oppression in the hands of the exploiting class. Today in Russia both were becoming weapons in the struggle for the interests of the working people.

This radical change was no easy thing to accomplish, as the soldiers of the old tsarist army knew from the discipline that held that army in a vice. Lenin then cited a recent experience of his. When he was in Finland, he had heard an old Finnish peasant woman say that whereas in the old days the man with the gun was there to prevent her gathering faggots in the forest, today he was no longer dangerous; on the contrary, he even protected her. In spite of all the. mud slung at us by the bourgeois and their followers, Lenin said, in spite of all the plotting of the whiteguards, once it had been brought home even to such unenlightened masses, the exploited, that the present army was their protector, the Soviet government stood firmly planted.

Lenin then went on to say that, as in the past, famine was strengthening the hand of the profiteers and capitalists. The same thing was occurring today, so that the new army might in the civil war have to deal with these people who were making money out of the famine. Let the old world—the representatives of an outworn society—go on trying to help the starving in the old way; the new world would, despite them, do it in a new way. We would win, Lenin said,

if the vanguard of the working people, the Red Army, remembered that it was there to represent and defend the interests of international socialism. Lenin further said that we were not alone, as had been shown by the events in Austria, as well as by like-minded people in all the countries of Europe, who, although held in subjection at present, were doing their work.

Pravda No. 135,
July 4, 1918

Published according to
the *Pravda* text

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A MEETING OF THE COMMUNIST GROUP AT THE FIFTH CONGRESS OF SOVIETS JULY 3, 1918[184]

BRIEF NEWSPAPER REPORT

Dealing with Russia's international position, Lenin said that it continued to be dangerous. The external enemy was not only threatening to attack Russia but was already tearing pieces from her.

This unstable and precarious situation would probably continue until capital was overthrown by the efforts of the working class of the whole world. The present stage must be taken advantage of as a breathing-space in which to consolidate the Soviet regime.

Speaking of the world war, Lenin stated that the victory of German arms was making peace between the imperialist countries impossible. The British and French capitalists could not reconcile themselves to Germany retaining the huge booty she had seized. Moreover, after a series of offensives in France, where Germany had lost hundreds of thousands of men, a certain balance of forces had ensued, and German bayonets no longer constituted a direct threat. Besides, the Entente[185] imperialists were fully alive to the disruption and catastrophic state of affairs that had come about in Austria-Hungary.

There was one conclusion to be drawn from the general state of affairs, and that was that the war was becoming hopeless. This hopelessness was an earnest that our socialist revolution had a very good chance of holding on until the world revolution broke out; and the guarantee of this was

the war, which only the working masses could end. Our task was to maintain the Soviet regime intact; and that was what we were doing by retreating and manoeuvring. To join open battle at this juncture would damage the position of the world revolution.

Describing the economic state of the country as we had inherited it from the various Right parties formerly in power, Lenin spoke of the great difficulties that would attend the work of economic development organised on new lines, on new principles.

In the struggle against famine, he said, we had two enemies: the rich and the economic disruption. In this struggle it was essential that the poor peasant should believe in a fraternal alliance with the worker. He would believe only deeds, not words. Our only hope here lay in an alliance of the class-conscious urban workers with the poor peasants. The aim of this struggle—the right of all to bread and the right to fair distribution—was a great aim. The ability to distribute equally was the foundation of socialism, which we were building. For this we were answerable not only to our brothers, but to the workers of the whole world.

They must be shown that socialism was not something impossible, but a firm workers' system, and one for which the proletariat of the whole world must strive.

Pravda No. 135,
July 4, 1918

Published according to
the *Pravda* text

FIFTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS', PEASANTS', SOLDIERS' AND RED ARMY DEPUTIES[186]

JULY 4-10, 1918

Newspaper report published
July 6, 1918
in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 139

Published according to the text of the book: *Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets*, *Verbatim Report*, All-Russia C.E.C. Publishers, 1918; first five paragraphs of the reply to the debate published according to the text of the magazine *Bulletin of Ways of Communication* No. 7-8, 1918

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1

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS
JULY 5, 1918

Comrades, permit me, even though the previous speaker was at times extremely excited,[187] to submit my report on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars in the usual way, that is, to deal with the main questions of principle in order of merit, and not enter into the argument which the previous speaker would so much like to have, and which, of course, I have no intention of declining altogether. You know that since the last Congress, the chief factor which has determined our position, changed our policy and shaped our tactics and attitude towards certain other parties in Russia has been the Brest Treaty. You will recall how many reproaches were hurled at us at the last Congress, how many accusations were levelled at us, and how many voices were raised declaring that this famous respite would not help Russia, that in any case an international imperialist alliance had been concluded, and that in practice the retreat we were advocating would lead nowhere. This basic factor determined the whole position of the capitalist states, too, and we must naturally dwell on it. I think that the past three and a half months have made it absolutely indisputable that despite all reproaches and accusations we ware right. We may say that the proletariat and the peasantry, who do not exploit others, do not make profits out of the people's hunger, are entirely and unreservedly on our side, and at any rate are against those unwise people who would embroil them in war, who are against the Brest Treaty. (*Commotion.*)

Nine-tenths of the people are on our side, and the clearer the situation becomes, the more certain it is that now, when the West-European imperialist parties, the two chief imperialist groups, are locked in a life-and-death struggle, when with every month, every week, every day they are pushing each other nearer and nearer to the abyss whose outlines we can clearly perceive, at such a time it is clearer than ever to us that our tactics were right. That is best felt and realised by those who have been through the war, who have seen what war means and do not talk about it in airy terms. To us it is perfectly clear that as long as each of these groups is stronger than we are, and as long as that radical change which will permit the workers, and the working people of Russia in general, to enjoy the fruits of the revolution, to recover from the blow that has been dealt them and to rise to their full stature, so as to create a new, organised and disciplined army on new lines, in order that we may, not merely in words, but in deeds ... (*loud applause on the Left. Voice from the Right*: "Kerensky!"), as long as that radical change has not come, we have to wait. Therefore, the deeper we go down among the masses of the people, and the nearer we get to the workers of the mills and factories and to the working peasants, who do not exploit hired labour, do not defend the profiteering interests of the kulak, who conceals his grain and fears the food dictatorship, the more surely may we say that there too we shall meet and are meeting—in fact we may say with absolute conviction that we have already met—with full sympathy and unanimous accord. Yes, it is a fact that at present the people do not want to fight, cannot fight, and will not fight these enemies—the imperialists—however much some may try, in their ignorance or infatuation with phrases, to drive them into this war, and no matter what catchwords they may use as a camouflage. No, comrades, anyone who now calls for war directly or indirectly, in open or veiled form, anyone who howls about the Brest Peace Treaty being a noose, fails to see that it is Kerensky and the landowners, capitalists and kulaks who are putting a noose around the necks of the workers and peasants of Russia ... (*Voice*: "Mirbach!" *Commotion.*) Let them scream, as they do at every meeting; among the people their cause is hopeless! (*Applause and commotion.*)

I am not a bit surprised that, in view of the predicament these people are in, the only way they can answer is by shouts, hysterical outcries, abuse and wild behaviour (*applause*), when they have no other arguments.... (*Voice*: "We have arguments!" *Commotion.*)

Ninety-nine out of every hundred Russian soldiers know what incredible suffering it cost to get the mastery of this war. They know that in order to put war on a new socialist and economic basis (*cries of* "Mirbach won't let you!"), tremendous effort will be required, and first of all we had to put an end to the war of plunder. Knowing that the frenzied forces of imperialism are continuing to fight, and that in the three months which have elapsed since the last Congress they have moved several steps nearer to the abyss, they will not join in this war. After we had performed our duty to all the nations, realising the value of a declaration of peace and bringing its value home to the workers of all countries through our Brest delegation, headed by Comrade Trotsky, when we openly proposed an honest democratic peace, this proposal was frustrated by the frenzied bourgeoisie of all countries. Our position cannot be any other but to wait, and the people will yet see these frenzied imperialist cliques, strong though they still are today, tumble into the abyss which they are now approaching, as everybody can see.... (*Applause.*) Everybody can see that who does not deliberately close his eyes. In these three and a half months, during which the frenzied imperialist party has been doing its best to drag out the war, this abyss has undoubtedly drawn nearer. We know, feel and realise that we are not yet ready for war; that is what the soldiers, the men under arms, who know what war means in practice, are saying. And as for the cries that we should throw off the Brest noose at once, they come from the Mensheviks, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the followers of Kerensky, the Constitutional-Democrats. You know where the followers of the landowners and the capitalists, where the hangers-on of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Constitutional-Democrats still stand. In that camp, the speeches of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who also incline towards war, will be greeted with loud applause. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, as the previous speakers have said, find

themselves in an awkward predicament: they have landed in the wrong box. (*Applause.*)

We know that great revolutions arise from the very depths of the people, that this takes months and years, and we are not surprised that in the course of the revolution the Left Socialist-Revolutionary party has shown such incredible vacillations. Trotsky has told us about these vacillations here, and it only remains for me to add that on October 26, when we invited the Left Socialist-Revolutionary comrades to join the government, they refused, and when Krasnov was at the gates of Petrograd, they were not with us, with the consequent result that they helped not us, but Krasnov. We are not surprised at these vacillations. Yes, this party has been through a great deal. But, comrades, there is a limit to everything.

We know that revolution is a thing that is learned by experience and practice, that a revolution becomes a real revolution only when tens of millions of people rise up with one accord, as one man. (*Lenin's words are drowned by applause. Cries of* "Long live the Soviets!") This struggle, which is raising us to a new life, has been begun by one hundred and fifteen million people: this great struggle must be examined with the utmost attention. (*Loud applause.*) In October, when the Soviet regime was founded, on October 26, 1917, when ... (*commotion, shouts and applause*) our party and its representatives on the Central Executive Committee invited the Left Socialist-Revolutionary party to join the government, it refused. When the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries refused to join our government they were not with us, but against us. (*Commotion on the Left Socialist-Revolutionary benches.*) I am very sorry to have to say things you do not like. (*The commotion on the Right becomes louder.*) But what's to be done? If Krasnov, the Cossack general.... (*The commotion and outcries prevent Lenin from continuing.*) When, on October 26, you vacillated, not knowing yourselves what you wanted, and refused to join us.... (*Commotion lasting several minutes.*) The truth is hard to swallow! Let me remind you that those who vacillated, who do not know themselves what they want and refuse to join us, willingly listen to the fables of others. I have told you that the soldier who has been in the war.... (*Commotion and*

applause.) When the previous speaker had the floor the vast majority of the delegates did not interrupt her. Well, it is only to be expected. If these people prefer to withdraw from the Congress, well, then, good riddance! (*Commotion and excitement on the Right benches.*)

And so, comrades, the whole course of events has shown that we were right in concluding the Brest peace. And those who tried at the last Congress of Soviets to crack feeble jokes about the respite have seen and learnt that we have secured a breathing-space; true, it cost us incredible effort, but during this breathing-space our workers and peasants have taken a tremendous step forward to socialist construction, while the Western powers, on the contrary, have taken a tremendous step towards that abyss for which imperialism is heading faster and faster with every week of this war.

And so the only way I can explain the conduct of those who denounce our tactics because of the difficulty of our situation is that they are completely bewildered. I repeat that one only has to recall the past three and a half months. I would remind those who were at the last Congress of some of the things that were said there, and would recommend those who were not to read the minutes or the newspaper reports of that Congress, which will convince them that events have fully corroborated our tactics. There can be no boundary line between the victories of the October Revolution and the victories of the international socialist revolution; outbursts are bound to begin in other countries. And in order to hasten them we did all we could in the Brest period. Those who have been through the revolutions of 1905 and 1917, those who have pondered over them and examined them thoughtfully and seriously, will know that these revolutions in our country were engendered with incredible difficulty.

Two months before January 1905 or February 1917 no revolutionary, whatever his experience and knowledge, however familiar he was with the life of the people, could have foreseen that Russia would be shaken by such explosions. To fasten on individual cries and launch appeals to the masses which are tantamount to terminating the peace and plunging us into war is the policy of people who are

utterly bewildered and have lost their heads completely. And to prove that this is so, I will cite the words of a person whose sincerity neither I nor anybody else will question—the words of Comrade Spiridonova, from the speech which was published in *Golos Trudovovo Krestyanstva*,[188] and which has not been repudiated. In this speech of June 30, Comrade Spiridonova inserted three totally irrelevant lines to the effect that the Germans had presented us with an ultimatum to deliver to them 2,000 million rubles' worth of textiles.

A party which drives its most sincere representatives into such an awful quagmire of lies and deceit, such a party is absolutely doomed. The workers and peasants cannot help knowing what tremendous effort and anguish it cost us to sign the Brest Treaty. Surely, it is not necessary to exaggerate the hardships of that peace by the kind of fables and fabrications to which even the sincerest members of that party resort. But we know that truth is with the people, and we are guided by it, while this party writhes in hysterics. From that standpoint, conduct inspired by such utter bewilderment is worse than any provocation. Especially if we compare all the parties of Russia as a whole, as a scientific attitude towards the revolution requires. One must never neglect to examine the relations of all the parties as a whole. Individual persons or groups may be mistaken, may be baffled, may not be able to explain their own conduct; but if we take all the parties of Russia as a whole and examine their mutual relations, there can be no mistake. Just see what the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Kerensky, Savinkov and the rest, are saying now, when they hear the appeals of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.... Why, they applaud like mad. They would be glad to embroil Russia in a war just now, when it would suit Milyukov's purpose. And to talk like that, to talk now about the Brest peace being a noose, is to cast the landowner's noose around the neck of the Russian peasant. When they talk here about fighting the Bolsheviks, like the previous speaker, who spoke about a quarrel with the Bolsheviks, my reply is: no, comrades, this is no quarrel, but a genuine and irrevocable rupture, a rupture between those who are bearing the whole onus of the situation by telling the people the truth, and not allow-

ing themselves to be intoxicated by outcries, and those who are intoxicating themselves with such outcries and involuntarily doing the work of the enemy, the work of provocateurs. (*Applause.*)

I will now conclude the first part of my report. During these three and a half months of frantic imperialist war, the imperialist states have drawn nearer to the abyss into which they are driving the people. This wounded beast has torn many a lump of flesh from our living organism. Our enemies are nearing this abyss so fast that even if they had more than three and a half months at their disposal, and even if the imperialist carnage were again to inflict just as heavy losses on us, it is they who would perish, not we; for the rapidity with which their power of resistance is diminishing is drawing them rapidly nearer to the abyss. We, on the other hand, in spite of the tremendous difficulties, which we do not conceal from the people, after these three and a half months have many a healthy shoot of a healthy organism to show; both in industry and everywhere else, small-scale constructive work is going on, unpretentious and unsensational though it may be. It has already yielded very fruitful results, and, given another three months, six months, a whole winter season of such work, we shall march forward, while the West-European imperialist beast, worn out by the struggle, will be unable to stand such a contest, because within it forces are maturing which, although they have no faith in themselves as yet, will lead imperialism to its doom. And what has already been begun there, and begun radically and fundamentally, is not likely to be changed in three and a half months. Far too little is being said about this constructive, small-scale, creative work, and it seems to me that we should talk about it more. I, for my part, cannot pass over this fact in silence, if only because the attacks of the previous speaker must be taken into account. I would mention the resolution of the Central Executive Committee of April 29, 1918.* At the time I made a speech in which I spoke of the immediate tasks of the Soviet government,** and I pointed out that notwithstanding the incredible

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* See this volume, pp. 314-17.—*Ed.*

** *Ibid.*, pp. 279-313.—*Ed.*

difficulties of our position prime attention at home must be given to constructive work.

And here we must cherish no illusions, and must say that to this work, difficult though it may be, we must devote all our efforts. Our experience, which I can tell you about, shows that in this respect we have undoubtedly made big strides. To be sure, if one looks only for outward results, as the bourgeoisie do, seizing on our individual mistakes, one can scarcely speak of success; but we look at it from a totally different angle. The bourgeoisie picks on the administration of the river fleet, for example, and points out how often we have set about reconstructing it and proclaims with malicious glee that the Soviet government cannot cope with the job. To which I reply that it is true that we have time and again reconstructed the administration of our river fleet, as we have the administration of the railways, and now are about to undertake an even bigger reorganisation of the Economic Council. That is the whole meaning of the revolution, namely, that socialism has passed from the sphere of a dogma, which can be discussed only by people who understand nothing at all, from the sphere of book knowledge, of a programme, to the sphere of practical work. And today the workers and peasants are making socialism with their own hands.

The times have passed, and in Russia, I am sure, have passed beyond recall, when we used to argue about the socialist programme on the basis of book knowledge. Today socialism can be discussed only on the basis of experience. The whole meaning of the revolution lies in the fact that it has for the first time in history discarded the old apparatus of bourgeois officialdom, the bourgeois system of administration, and has created conditions which enable the workers and peasants themselves to set about this job, a job of incredible difficulty, whose difficulties it would be absurd to conceal from ourselves; for the capitalists and landowners have for centuries been hounding and persecuting tens of millions of people even for harbouring the thought of administering the land. Now, in the space of a few weeks, a few months, in the midst of desperate and frightful disruption, when the whole body of Russia has been bruised and battered by the war, so that the people are like a man who has been thrashed

within an inch of his life—at such a time, when the tsars, the landowners and the capitalists have left us with a country in a state of utter disruption, the new job, the new work of building must be shouldered by the new classes, by the workers and those peasants who do not exploit hired workers and do not profiteer in grain. Yes, this is an extremely difficult task, but an extremely rewarding one. Every month of such work and such experience is worth ten, if not twenty, years of our history. Yes, we are not afraid to confess what an acquaintance with our decrees will show, namely, that we have constantly to alter them; we have not yet produced anything finished and complete, we do not yet know a socialism that can be embodied in clauses and paragraphs. If we are now able to submit a Soviet Constitution[189] to this Congress, it is only because Soviets have been set up and tested in all parts of the country, because you yourselves have created that Constitution and tested it in all parts of the country; only six months after the October Revolution, and nearly a year after the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets, are we able to write down what already exists in practice.

In the economic sphere, where we are only just beginning to build socialism, and where a new discipline must be built up, we have no such experience—we are acquiring it by dint of alteration and reconstruction. That is our prime task. We say that every new social order demands new relations between man and man, a new discipline. There was a time when economic life was impossible without feudal discipline, when there was only one kind of discipline—the discipline of the lash; and there was a time of the rule of the capitalists, when the disciplinary force was starvation. But now, with the Soviet revolution, with the beginning of the socialist revolution, discipline must be built on entirely new principles; it must be a discipline of faith in the organising power of the workers and poor peasants, a discipline of comradeship, a discipline of the utmost mutual respect, a discipline of independence and initiative in the struggle. Anyone who resorts to the old capitalist methods, anyone who at a time of famine and want argues in the old, capitalist way—if I sell grain on my own, I shall make a bigger profit; if I set out on my own to get grain, I shall

get it easier—anyone who argues in that way may be choosing the easier road, but he will never arrive at socialism.

It is simple and easy to keep within the old realm of customary capitalist relations; but we want to take a new road. It is one which demands of us and of all the people a high level of political consciousness and organisation; it demands more time and involves graver mistakes. But we say that only those who attempt nothing practical make no mistakes.

If, in the opinion of the meeting, the period under review includes experiments in which one frequently meets with changes, amendments, reversions to the old, that is not the chief thing, the chief meaning and value of this period. The old government apparatus of bureaucrats, for whom it was enough to order an increase of salary, is a thing of the past. We have now to deal with workers' organisations which are taking economic administration into their own hands. We have to deal with the railway workers, who used to be worse off than others, and who have a legitimate right to demand an improvement of conditions. Tomorrow the river transport workers will submit their demands, and the day after, the middle peasants—I shall speak of them at greater length—who often feel they are worse off than the worker, whom we treat with the utmost attention, and to whose interest all our decrees are devoted—a thing the previous speaker has absolutely failed to grasp. All this creates enormous difficulties, but they are difficulties which are due to the fact that the workers and poor peasants for the first time in centuries are themselves, with their own hands, organising the whole economic life of Russia. And so, we have to find means of satisfying just demands; we have to alter decrees and reconstruct the system of administration. Side by side with cases of mistakes and failures—cases which the bourgeois press seizes upon and which, of course, are numerous—we achieve successes, we learn by these partial mistakes and failures, we learn by experience how to build the edifice of socialism. And when we are showered with new demands from all sides, we say: that is as it should be, that is just what socialism means, when each wants to improve his condition and all want to enjoy the benefits of life. But the country is poor, the country is poverty-stricken, and it is

impossible just now to satisfy all demands; that is why it is so difficult to build the new edifice in the midst of disruption. But those who believe that socialism can be built at a time of peace and tranquillity are profoundly mistaken: it will everywhere be built at a time of disruption, at a time of famine. That is how it must be. And when we see before us people with real ideas, we say: all the thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of workers and working peasants have set about building the new, socialist edifice with their own hands. A profound revolution is now beginning in the countryside, where the kulaks are agitating and trying to interfere with the working peasants who do not exploit the labour of others or profiteer in grain, and there the task is different. In the towns the thing is to organise the factories, the metal industry; and what with the havoc of the war, to distribute production, to distribute raw materials and other materials is a very difficult task.

There the workers are learning to do this and are forming central organs of administration; there we are having to reconstruct the Supreme Economic Council; for the old laws, passed at the beginning of the year, are already out of date, the workers' movement is marching ahead, the old workers' control is already antiquated, and the trade unions are becoming the embryos of administrative bodies for all industry. (*Applause.*) In this sphere quite a lot has already been done, but still we cannot boast of any brilliant successes. We know that in this sphere the bourgeois elements, the capitalists, landowners and kulaks will for a long time yet have the opportunity to carry on their propaganda and say that, as usual, a decree has been passed but is not being enforced, another has only just been passed, yet after three months it is already being altered, while profiteering is going on just the same as under capitalism. Yes, it is true that we do not know of any universal quack panacea for putting an end to profiteering at one stroke. The habits of the capitalist system are too strong; to re-educate the people who have been brought up to these habits for centuries is no easy matter and will take a long time. But we say that our fighting weapon is organisation. We must organise everything, take everything into our own hands, keep a check on the kulaks and profiteers at every step,

declare implacable war on them and never allow them to breathe freely, controlling their every move.

We know from experience that alterations of decrees are unavoidable, for new difficulties are encountered which are a source of fresh changes. And if in the matter of food supply we have now arrived at the point of organising the poor peasants, and if our former comrades, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, say in all sincerity—which cannot be doubted—that our ways have parted, our firm reply to them is: all the worse for you, for that means that you have turned your back on socialism. (*Applause.*)

Comrades! The food question is the main question, it is the one to which we are devoting most attention in our policy-making. A host of small measures which are imperceptible to the outsider, but which the Council of People's Commissars has adopted—such as the steps to improve the water and rail transport systems, the clearing up of the war commissariat stores, the fight against profiteering—were all directed towards putting food supply on a proper footing. Not only our country, but even the most civilised countries, which never knew what famine meant before the war, are now all in a state of utmost distress, created by the imperialists in their struggle for the supremacy of one group or another. In the West, tens of millions of people are suffering the torments of starvation. It is this that makes social revolution inevitable, for social revolution stems not from programmes but from the fact that tens of millions of people say: "Rather than live and starve, we prefer to die for the revolution." (*Applause.*)

A terrible disaster—famine—has befallen us, and the more difficult our situation, the more acute the food crisis, the more the capitalists intensify their struggle against Soviet power. You know that the Czechoslovak mutiny is a mutiny of men who have been bought by the British and French imperialists. We are constantly hearing of revolts against the Soviets in one place or another. The kulak risings are spreading from region to region. In the Don region, there is Krasnov, whom the Russian workers magnanimously allowed to go free in Petrograd when he came and surrendered his sword, for the prejudices of the intellectual are still strong and the intellectuals protested against capital punish-

ment—Krasnov was allowed to go free because of the intellectual's prejudice against capital punishment. But I would like to see the people's court today, the workers' or peasants' court, which would not sentence Krasnov, who is shooting workers and peasants, to be shot. We are told that when people are sentenced to be shot by Dzerzhinsky's commission[190] it is all right, but if a court were to declare publicly and openly that a man was a counter-revolutionary and deserved to be shot, that would be wrong. People who have sunk to such depths of hypocrisy are political corpses. (Applause.) No, a revolutionary who does not want to be a hypocrite cannot renounce capital punishment. There has never been a revolution or a period of civil war without shootings.

Our food supply has been reduced to an almost catastrophic state. We have reached the direst period in our revolution. We are facing the most distressful period of all—there never has been a more difficult period in workers' and peasants' Russia—the period that remains until the harvest. I have seen plenty of party differences and revolutionary disputes in my day, and I am not surprised to find that in such a time of stress an increasing number of people are giving way to hysterics and crying: "I will resign from the Soviets," and talking of the decrees abolishing capital punishment. But he is a poor revolutionary who at a time of acute struggle is halted by the immutability of a law. In a period of transition laws have only a temporary validity; and when a law hinders the development of the revolution, it must be abolished or amended. Comrades, the worse the famine becomes, the clearer it becomes that this desperate calamity must be combated by equally desperate measures. Socialism, I repeat, has ceased to be a dogma, just as it has perhaps ceased to be a programme. Our Party has not yet drawn up a new programme, but the old one is already worthless. The proper and equitable distribution of bread—that is what constitutes the basis of socialism today. (*Applause.*) The war has bequeathed to us a legacy of economic disruption; the efforts of Kerensky and the landowners and kulaks saying, "After us the deluge", have reduced the country to such a state that they say, "The worse it gets, the better." The war has bequeathed us such

hardships that in this matter of the food supply we have the very essence of the whole socialist system, and we must take this matter into our hands and find a practical solution for it. And we ask ourselves what is to be done about bread: are we to continue along the old, capitalist lines, with peasants taking advantage of the situation and making thousands of rubles profit out of grain, at the same time calling themselves working peasants, and sometimes even Left Socialist-Revolutionaries? (*Applause and commotion.*) They argue like this: if people are starving, grain prices will rise; if the towns are starving, I will stuff my pockets; and if the starvation becomes worse, I will make thousands more. But I know very well that the blame for this kind of argument does not lie with individuals. The whole abominable heritage of landowner and capitalist society has taught people to argue, to think and to live like this; and to reform the life of tens of millions of people is terribly difficult; it will require long and persistent work, and this work we have only just begun. We would never think of blaming people who, tormented by hunger and seeing no benefit in the organisation of a socialist system of bread distribution, scurry to look after themselves and let everything else go hang. These people cannot be blamed. But we do say that when it is a case of representatives of parties, when it is a case of people belonging to a definite party, when it is a case of large bodies of people, we expect them to look at the matter, not from the standpoint of the suffering, tormented, hungry individual, against whom nobody would think of raising his hand, but from the standpoint of the building of a new society.

I repeat, it will never be possible to build socialism at a time when everything is running smoothly and tranquilly; it will never be possible to realise socialism without the landowners and capitalists putting up a furious resistance. The worse our situation is, the more gleefully they rub their hands and the more they resort to revolt; the worse our situation is and the more saboteurs there are in our midst, the more eagerly they embark on all kinds of Czechoslovak and Krasnov affairs. And we say that the old way is not the way to cope with this, hard though it may be to drag the cart forward, uphill, instead of allowing it to slip back

downhill. We know very well that not a week or even a day passed without the Council of People's Commissars considering the food problem, without our issuing thousands of recommendations, orders and decrees, and discussing how to combat famine. Some say there is no need for special prices, for fixed prices, for a grain monopoly: give people a free hand to trade. The rich will get richer still, and if the poor die of starvation, well, they always have. But a socialist cannot argue like that; at this moment, when the hill is steeper than ever and the cart has to be dragged up the steepest inclines, socialism has ceased to be a matter of party differences and has become a practical issue; it is a question of whether we can hold out against the kulaks, by allying ourselves with the peasants who do not profiteer in grain; it is a question of whether we can hold out now, when we have to fight, and work of the heaviest kind lies ahead of us. They talk about the Poor Peasants' Committees. Those who have seen the torments of hunger for themselves will clearly realise that in order to break and ruthlessly crush the kulaks, the most drastic and ruthless meansures are required. When we proceeded to organise unions of poor peasants, we fully realised what a severe and drastic measure this was; but only an alliance of the towns with the rural poor and with those who have stocks but do not profiteer, with those who want to cope vigorously with the difficulties and ensure that the grain surpluses go to the state and are distributed among the working people—such an alliance is the sole method of waging this struggle. And the way to wage this struggle is not by means of programmes and speeches; this struggle with famine will show who is going the direct route to socialism, despite all trials and hardships, and who is succumbing to the trickery and deceit of the kulaks.

If there are people in the Left Socialist-Revolutionary party who, like the previous speaker—one of the sincerest, and therefore one who is most liable to be carried away, most subject to changes of opinion—say that they cannot work with the Bolsheviks and are quitting, we shall not regret it for a minute. Socialists who quit at a moment like this, when hundreds and thousands of people are dying of hunger while others have such large surpluses of grain

that they had not sold them before last August, when the fixed prices for grain were doubled—against which all democrats protested—those who know that the people are suffering untold torments of hunger yet do not want to sell their grain at the price at which the middle peasants are selling it, are enemies of the people, they are out to ruin the revolution and are lending their support to oppression—they are friends of the capitalists! War on such people, relentless war on them! (*General applause, in which a large number of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries take part.*) A thousand times wrong, a thousand times mistaken is he who allows himself even for a moment to be carried away by enemy talk and to say that this is a fight against the peasantry—as incautious or thoughtless Left Socialist-Revolutionaries sometimes do. No, this is a fight against that insignificant minority, the village kulaks, this is a fight to save socialism and to distribute bread in Russia properly (*Voices*: "What about goods?") We shall fight in alliance with the overwhelming majority of the peasants; we shall win this fight, and then every European worker will see in practice what socialism means.

We shall get help in this struggle from anyone who has been toiling all his life and who may not know scientifically what socialism means, but who knows that he earned his bread at a hard price. He will understand us. That man will be on our side. As for the kulaks who possess surpluses of grain and are capable of concealing that grain at a moment of extreme national calamity, at a moment when all the gains of the revolution are at stake, when the Skoropadskys of every hue and in every part of the country, occupied or not, are craning their necks and only waiting for the moment to overthrow the power of the workers and peasants by famine and reinstate the landowners—at such a moment it is our cardinal socialist duty to proclaim ruthless war on the kulaks. He is a poor socialist who at this moment of grave difficulty and severe trial for the starving people and for the socialist revolution washes his hands and repeats the lying tales of the bourgeoisie.

It is false, a thousand times false, to say this is a fight against the peasantry! I have seen this said hundreds of times in the columns of the Constitutional-Democratic news-

papers, and I am not surprised to hear them crying that the workers have split with the peasantry. When they hysterically cry: "Peasants, open your eyes, come to your senses and have done with the Bolsheviks!"—when I hear and read things like this, I am not at all surprised. There it is quite in place. These people are serving the master it is their function to serve. But I would not like to be in the skin of a socialist who sinks to talk like this! (*Loud applause.*) Comrades, we fully realise what incredible difficulties the solution of the food problem entails. Here the prejudices are most profound; here the interests are most deep-rooted—kulak interests; here division, stagnation, the scattered character of village life, ignorance—all, in many cases, are united against us. But we say that in spite of these difficulties, we cannot withdraw; famine is not a thing to be trifled with; and if the masses of the people do not receive assistance in this famine, hunger is capable of driving them even into the arms of Skoropadsky. It is false to say that this is a fight against the peasantry! Anyone who says that is an out-and-out criminal; those who have allowed themselves to be driven by hysteria to such talk are victims of a terrible misfortune. No, we are not even fighting the middle peasant, let alone the poor peasant. All over Russia, the middle peasants have only the smallest surpluses of grain. The middle peasants for decades before the revolution lived worse than the workers. Before the revolution their life was one of unrelieved want and oppression. Our policy towards these middle peasants is one of agreement. The socialist revolution means equality for all the working people; it would be unfair for the urban worker to receive more than the middle peasant, who does not exploit the labour of others by hiring labour or profiteering; the peasants suffer from greater want and oppression than the workers, and fare even worse than the workers. They have no organisations or trade unions to work for the improvement of their conditions. Even with the workers' unions we find it necessary to hold dozens of meetings to try and level out wages among the various trades, and all the same cannot get them levelled. Every sensible worker knows that this will require a long time. See how many complaints are received by the Commissariat for

Labour! You will find that every trade is raising its head; they don't want to live in the old way; they don't want to live like slaves, they say. In this poverty-stricken, destitute country we want to heal the wounds it has suffered. We must somehow or other save economic life, which has almost completely broken down. This can only be done by organisation. In order to organise the peasantry, we issued the decree about the Poor Peasants' Committees. Only the enemies of socialism can be opposed to this decree. We said that we considered it fair to lower the price of textiles We are registering and nationalising positively everything. (*Applause.*) And that will permit us to regulate the distribution of the products of industry.

We said: cut the prices of textiles for the poor peasants by half, and for the middle peasants by 25 per cent. Perhaps these scales are wrong. We do not claim that our solution of the problem is right. We do not say that. To solve the problem rightly, go and do it together. (*Applause.*) Sitting in your armchairs in the chief administrations, fighting profiteering and trying to catch swindlers who are doing their dirty work in secret, is not going to solve the problem.

Only when the Commissariat for Food, in conjunction with the Commissariat for Agriculture, nationalises all goods and fixes prices—do we really come close up to socialism. It is only the working people of the towns and the rural poor, all those who labour, do not rob others, do not exploit the labour of others either by hiring or by profiteering, only they come close to socialism—for the man who demands a hundred rubles or more for grain is no less a profiteer than the man who employs hired labour; perhaps he is even a worse, a more arrant profiteer. After a desperately difficult half-year of Soviet rule, we have now arrived at the organisation of the poor peasants. It is a pity we did not arrive at it after half a week—that is where we are to blame! If we had been reproached with having brought in the decree on the organisation of the poor peasants and the food dictatorship six months too late, we should have welcomed the reproof. We say that only now that we have taken this path has socialism ceased to be a mere phrase and is becoming a practical thing. It is possible that the decree is unhappily conceived, that the scales are wrong. How were we to

determine them? Only by your experience. How many times have we altered the railwaymen's scales, even though they have their trade unions, whereas the poor peasants have none! Let us co-operate in checking whether the scales laid down in the decree on the poor peasants are right, whether it is right to lower prices for the poor peasants by half and for the middle peasants by a quarter, and to take everything away from the rich peasants—whether these scales are right or not.

If there is to be a fight, we shall wage that fight by bold decrees without hesitating for a moment. It will be a real fight for socialism—not for a dogma, not for a programme, for a party, for a faction, but for living socialism, for the distribution of bread among hundreds of thousands and millions of starving people in the foremost districts of Russia, for taking grain wherever it is to be found and distributing it properly. I repeat, we do not doubt for a moment that ninety-nine peasants out of every hundred, when they learn the truth, when they receive the decree, test it, try it in practice and tell us how to correct it—and we will correct it, we will alter the scales—when they tackle this job and get an idea of its practical difficulty, these peasants will be on our side and will say, we are displaying the healthy instinct of the working man, and that this, and only this, will decide the real issue, the fundamental and vital issue—socialism. We shall establish proper prices for goods, we shall establish a monopoly on grain, on textiles and on all products; and then the people will say: "Yes, the distribution of labour, the distribution of bread and other products inaugurated by socialism is better than it was before." And that is what the people are beginning to say. In spite of a host of mistakes, in spite of incidents which we make no attempt to conceal, but rather drag into the light and hold up to shame—cases when our detachments themselves succumb to profiteering, sink down into that slippery gulf into which all the capitalist habits and customs tend to drag people—yes, there are such cases everywhere, we know that people cannot be remoulded all at once, that you cannot inspire tens of millions of people with faith in socialism all at once (where are they to get this faith from? Not out of their own heads, surely? No, from their exerience)—

but in spite of all this, people are beginning to say that bread can be secured without profiteering, and that the only salvation from famine lies in an alliance of the urban, factory, industrial workers with the poor peasants, for only the poor peasant does not profiteer in grain. Yes, as soon as the middle peasant sees our decrees, reads them for himself, compares them with the talk and slanders of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the champions of the kulak, he will say that in establishing one scale for the poor peasants and another for the middle peasants, and in taking grain from the kulaks without compensation, we are acting rightly. He may not say that we are acting like socialists—he may not know that word—but he is our sure ally, for he does not profiteer in grain, and he will realise and agree that to profiteer in grain at a moment of direst danger to the socialist revolution is a heinous crime against the people.

Bread cannot be distributed by decree. But when, after long and persistent effort in establishing and improving the alliance of the factory, urban workers with the rural poor, with the working peasants who do not hire any labourers and do not engage in profiteering, we get this thing properly going, no hysterical outcries against our Party will succeed in rupturing that alliance. (*Applause.*)

When we promised the peasants socialisation of the land, we made a concession; for we understood that nationalisation could not be introduced at one stroke. We know that we may have made a mistake in embodying your socialisation of the land in our law of October 26.* It was a concession to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who refused to be in the government and said they would only remain if this law were passed. Spiridonova is a thousand times wrong in bringing forward unconnected facts and saying that she came to see me, humbled herself and implored. Comrades, many of you have been to see me and know that that cannot have been the case, that no comrade could have been treated like that. It must be a bad party indeed whose best spokesmen stoop to spreading fairy-tales. (*Commotion.*) I have a letter from Comrade Spiridonova—she has often written

* See present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 257-61.—*Ed.*

to me. I shall find that letter tomorrow and make it known. She writes: "Why do you refuse to grant two million for agricultural communes?" And this on the very day when Sereda, the People's Commissar for Agriculture, whose work she does not understand, submitted a proposal to assign ten million for agricultural communes.[191] (*Prolonged applause*). You heard Comrade Spiridonova say the same thing in her speech; but it must be a bad party indeed whose sincerest people stoop to spreading fairy-tales for propaganda purposes. I repeat, it must be a bad party indeed whose best and sincerest spokesmen go to the length of spreading such fairy-tales about the Soviet government! All the worse for them! Every peasant who comes to the Commissariat for Agriculture and reads that ten million have been assigned for agricultural communes will see and believe his own yes and ears more than somebody else's speeches, and will understand that these people have sunk so low as to spread fairy-tales, and he will turn his back on this party. (*Applause.*). I want to say only one thing in concluding my speech. Until the new harvest, until that harvest is brought to the starving localities of Petrograd and Moscow, a hard period of the Russian revolution lies before us. A really close alliance between the urban workers and the rural poor, the rural working masses who do not profiteer in grain, is the only thing that can save the revolution.

Our Congress shows that in spite of everything the alliance of all the working people is growing, spreading and gaining strength not only in Russia, but all over the world. Absurdly little, terribly little is known abroad about our revolution. The military censorship there lets nothing through. The comrades who returned from abroad have told us that; yet, in spite of everything, guided by sheer instinct, the European workers sympathise with the Bolshevik Government. And ever more numerous are voices showing that sympathy for the socialist revolution is growing in Europe in the countries where the imperialist war is still in progress. The Bolshevik Government is receiving expressions of gratitude, sympathy and support from German socialists and other men and women whose names are known to every enlightened worker and peasant, people like Clara Zetkin and Franz Mehring. In Italy, Lazzari, the old

secretary of the party, who at Zimmerwald regarded the Bolsheviks with mistrust, is now in prison for having expressed his sympathy with us.

Understanding of the revolution is growing. In France, comrades and workers, who at the Zimmerwald Conference treated the Bolsheviks with profound mistrust, the other day issued a manifesto in the name of the Committee of International Relations[192] earnestly appealing for support of the Bolshevik Government and opposing adventures by any party.

And so, comrades, however difficult and arduous the period that lies ahead of us may be, it is our duty to tell the truth and to open people's eyes to this, for only the people, by their initiative and organisation, by advancing demand after demand and defending the socialist republic, can help us. And we say, comrades, that there is not a shadow of doubt that if we follow the path which we have chosen and which events have confirmed, if we follow this path firmly and unswervingly, if we do not allow ourselves to be diverted from the right path by any phrase-making, illusions, deceit or hysterics, we have every chance in the world of maintaining our position and of resolutely furthering the victory of socialism in Russia, and thus furthering the victory of the world socialist revolution! (*Loud and prolonged applause and cheers.*)

2

REPLY TO THE DEBATE
JULY 5, 1918

All the objections of the opposition concerning my report begin with the question of the Brest Treaty. But such a formulation of the question could be called practical only if it led to practical results. None of their speeches about this have produced results, nor can they produce any. (*Applause.*)

If the party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries happened to have a majority, they would not be making so much fuss about this matter as they are making now. What should be discussed are the real achievements of the Soviet Republic on the road to socialism. We can assert—and not one speaker has denied this—that in this respect great success has been achieved since the last Congress. Nor have the representatives of the opposition refuted the fact that all who are in favour of tearing up the Brest peace are acting in the interests of restoring the power of the landowners and capitalists and rely for their strength on the support of Anglo-French imperialism. When I said that the Czechoslovaks in return for ten or fifteen million are also out to bring about this break, no one denied it. Can anyone deny that the Czechoslovaks, hiding behind the slogan of the Constituent Assembly, are aiming at dragging us into war?

The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries said it was impossible to create an army in a short time, but everything depends on how soon we put the fuel situation right, how the peasants get on, and what happens to the harvest.

Your appeals for the creation of guerilla detachments to fight a regular imperialist army are recognised as absurd by any soldier.

When people force us to go back to the question of the Brest peace, we say: "That peace will be violated if you overthrow Soviet power, and that will not happen!" (*Applause.*) Only then, on the basis of tearing up the Brest peace, will you be able to drag the masses of the working people into a war to the delight of the landowners, capitalists and whiteguards, who have been bribed with the millions of the Anglo-French imperialists. Sabotage of the Brest peace will in practice stem from forces hostile to the masses of the working people. None of the objections concerning the Brest peace can be considered practical. They are merely the hysterics of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

When it was said here that the Bolsheviks were yielding, and that their reports contained nothing of practical value, I recalled the words uttered here by one Socialist-Revolutionary, a Maximalist I think he was, to the effect that the Supreme Economic Council is passing from the control of production to its administration.[193] Isn't that statement of practical value? What, then, are those workers doing, who by their own efforts, through their trade unions, have begun to learn from the bosses the business of administering enterprises? You say that it is an easy thing to learn to administer, but every day we in the Supreme Economic Council have to settle thousands of conflicts and incidents which show that the worker has learnt a lot, and we must conclude that the workers are beginning to learn—slowly, to be sure, and with mistakes; but it is one thing to utter fine phrases, and another to see how with every passing month the worker is beginning to find his feet, how he is beginning to lose his timidity and to feel that he is the ruler. Rightly or wrongly, he is acting as the peasant does in an agricultural commune. Time has shown that the worker had to learn to administer industry, and all the rest is just empty talk and not worth a brass farthing. If, after six months of Soviet rule, we are now beginning to find that control is out of date, that is a big step forward.

The cry has been raised here that we are marking time, or even retreating. Nothing of the kind. You may persuade the kulak of that, but not the ordinary worker; he knows what we mean when we say, let us have better people than the ones you sent, make them learn better than you are learning.

And so, when the cry is raised here about concessions, let us ask any worker or peasant what he prefers: to pay in concessions the debt the Germans imposed upon us, or to fight? When we signed the Peace Treaty of Brest, we said of the imperialists that until they were vanquished by an international socialist revolution, we should not be able to defend ourselves in any other way than by retreating. That is unpleasant, but it will remain a fact—and it is better to tell the people so until we have built up an army, for which we shall need only a few years, not decades, provided we introduce a proper system of bread distribution, so that there will be stocks of grain for the army, gathered and stored. In what uyezd or gubernia have the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries done that? They have done nothing of the kind! And until it is done, we declare that all your cries are just empty talk; whereas when we take a step towards administration by the workers, we take a step forward. My words have been misquoted here. What I said was that it must be a bad party whose sincere members are obliged to stoop to such talk.

We have assigned a thousand million to our Commissariat for Food—isn't that a step forward? Much still remains to be arranged, and you can do it if you only have the desire. But through whom, I do not know. Not through the old officials, surely? Our workers and peasants on the Soviets are learning to do it (*applause*), and so the purchases of textiles and the appropriations are having their effect. Hundreds of times the Council of People's Commissars has discussed through whom to purchase textiles, how to exercise control, and how to get them distributed as quickly as possible. And we know that as the weeks go by measures have been devised for combating profiteering and catching profiteers, and that with every month the workers are getting a firmer mastery of this job—and this success of ours nobody can deny. We are advancing, not marking time. On June 28, we carried out nationalisation[194] to the extent perhaps of several hundred millions, yet you keep on objecting and repeating the talk of the bourgeois intellectuals. Socialism is not a job that can be done in a few months. We are not marking time, but are continuing to move towards socialism, and since the Brest peace we have come closer to it.

The workers have derived experience from a number of mistakes, they realise the gravity and difficulty of the struggle, while the peasants have experience in the socialisation of the land, and there can be no doubt that the more experienced and intelligent peasants are saying: "In the first spring we took land for ourselves; in the autumn we'll take over the whole job, the whole business of distributing the land." Do not forget that we are selling the peasants textiles at a 50 per cent rebate, that is, at half-price. Who else would have given the poor peasants textiles at such a price? We shall proceed towards socialism by way of grain, textiles and implements, which will not fall into the hands of the profiteers, but will go first and foremost to the poor peasants. That is socialism. (*Applause.*) After six months of socialist revolution, the people who get all their ideas from books understand nothing. We have arrived at a stage where we are taking the concrete step of distributing bread and exchanging textiles for bread in such a way that it is the poor that benefit, and not the rich profiteers. We are not a bourgeois republic; if we were we should not need Soviets. It is the poor that must benefit from the distribution of grain and textiles—that is something no republic in the world has attempted, but we are attempting it now. (*Applause.*) We are doing a noble work; we have the experience; and we are doing everything in our power to get the poor to organise. Cases of extortion and hooliganism are practically disappearing; for every such case there are a dozen others when the poor peasants and the middle peasants say: we must get rid of the kulak and the landowner! Since the Brest peace we have made tremendous strides in the education of the peasants, and they are now no longer novices in the struggle for socialism.

TELEGRAM TO J. V. STALIN

July 7, 1 a.m.

TSARITSYN
TO PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR STALIN

Today at about three p.m. a Left Socialist-Revolutionary killed Mirbach with a bomb. This murder is obviously in the interests of the monarchists or Anglo-French capitalists. The Left S.R.s, not wanting to surrender the assassin, arrested Dzerzhinsky and Latsis and began an uprising against us. We are liquidating it mercilessly this very night and we shall tell the people the whole truth: we are a hair's breadth from war. We have hundreds of Left S.R.s as hostages. Everywhere it is essential to crush mercilessly these pitiful and hysterical adventurers who have become tools in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries. All who are against war will be for us.

As regards Baku, the most important thing is that you should be continuously in contact with Shahumyan, and that Shahumyan should know of the Germans' proposal, made to Ambassador Joffe in Berlin, to the effect that the Germans would agree to halt the Turks' offensive against Baku if we guaranteed the Germans part of the oil: Of course, we shall agree. And so, be merciless against the Left S.R.s and report more frequently.

Lenin

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the manuscript

INTERVIEW GRANTED TO AN *IZVESTIA* CORRESPONDENT IN CONNECTION WITH THE LEFT SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARY REVOLT[195]

BRIEF REPORT

Revolution with remarkable consistency drives every proposition to its logical conclusion and ruthlessly exposes the utter futility and criminality of all wrong tactics.

The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, carried away by high-sounding phrases, have for several months now been screaming: "Down with the Brest peace! To arms against the Germans!"

We replied that under present conditions, in the present period of history, the Russian people cannot fight and do not want to fight.

Closing their eyes to the facts, they continued with insane obstinacy to persist in their own line, not sensing that they were drawing further and further away from the masses of the people, and determined at all costs, even by brute force, to impose their will on these masses, the will of their Central Committee, which included criminal adventurers, hysterical intellectuals, and so on.

And the further they drew away from the people, the more they earned the sympathies of the bourgeoisie, which was hoping to accomplish its designs by their hand.

Their criminal terrorist act and revolt have fully and completely opened the eyes of the broad masses to the abyss into which the criminal tactics of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary adventurers are dragging Soviet Russia, the Russia of the people.

On the day of the revolt, I myself and many other comrades had occasion to hear even the most backward sections of the people expressing their profound disgust of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries .

One simple old woman said indignantly on hearing of the assassination of Mirbach:

"The devils, so they've driven us into war after all!"

It at once became perfectly clear and obvious to everybody that the Socialist-Revolutionaries' terroristic act had brought Russia to the brink of war. That, in fact, was what the masses thought of the action of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

They are trying by underhand methods to embroil us in war with the Germans at a time when we cannot fight and do not want to fight. The masses will never forgive the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries for trampling so brutally on the will of the people and trying to force them into war.

And if anybody was well pleased with the action of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and rubbed his hands with glee, it was only the whiteguards and the servitors of the imperialist bourgeoisie whereas the worker and peasant masses have been rallying ever closer and more solidly around the Communist-Bolshevik Party, the authentic spokesman of the will of the masses.

Izvestia VTsIK No. 141,
July 8, 1918

Published according to
the *Izvestia* text

TO THE WORKERS OF PETROGRAD

Dear Comrades,

I am taking advantage of the fact that Comrade Kayurov, an old acquaintance of mine and well known to the Petrograd workers, is leaving for Petrograd, to send you a few words.

Comrade Kayurov has been in Simbirsk Gubernia and has himself observed the attitude of the kulaks to the poor peasants and to our government. He has perfectly realised what no Marxist and no class-conscious worker can doubt, namely, that the kulaks hate the Soviet government, the government of the workers, and *will inevitably overthrow it* if the workers do not *immediately* make every effort to forestall the attack of the kulaks on the Soviets and to smash the kulaks before they can manage to unite.

The class-conscious workers can do this at the present moment; they can rally the poor peasants around themselves, defeat the kulaks and smash them, *provided the vanguard* of the workers realise their duty, make every effort and organise *a mass campaign into the rural districts.*

Nobody but the workers of Petrograd can do this, for there are no other workers in Russia as class-conscious as the Petrograd workers. It is *foolish and criminal* to stay in Petrograd, starve, hang around idle factories and cherish the absurd dream of restoring Petrograd industry or defending Petrograd. That will mean the ruin of our revolution. The Petrograd workers must abandon such nonsense, send packing the fools who advocate it, and set out in *tens of thousands* for the Urals, the Volga and the South, where there

is an abundance of grain, where they can feed themselves and their families, where they *must* help the poor peasants to organise, and where the Petrograd worker is *indispensable* as an organiser, guide and leader.

Kayurov will recount his personal observations, and, I am certain, will convince all waverers. The revolution is in danger. Only a *mass* campaign of the Petrograd workers can save it. Arms and money we shall not stint.

With Communist greetings,
Lenin

July 12, 1918

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Published according to the manuscript

SPEECH AND GOVERNMENT STATEMENT AT THE SESSION OF THE ALL-RUSSIA C.E.C. JULY 15, 1918[196]

Comrades, our Soviet Republic cannot complain of any shortage of political crises and sudden political changes. No matter how simple, how elementary all the imperialist forces may be (and they cannot, of course, feel at ease side by side with the Socialist Soviet Republic), yet in a situation like the one we are passing through at present, with war still continuing on its former scale, the obviously dominant forces, the combination of the two imperialist groups continues to cause political crisis and the like. Concerning one such event, which either resembles or is a real political crisis, I have a communication to make to you.

Yesterday, July 14, at 11 p.m., the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs was visited by the German Chargé d'Affaires Doctor Ritzler, who informed him of the contents of a telegram he had just received from Berlin in which the German Government instructs him to request the Russian Government to allow a battalion of German soldiers in uniform to enter Moscow for the purpose of guarding the German Embassy and to allow these soldiers to be dispatched to Moscow at once.

It was further stated in the message that the German Government was far from aiming at any sort of occupation.

The People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, in agreement with the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, replied that the common people of Russia desire peace, that the Russian Government is prepared to give the German Embassy, Consulate and Commissions an entirely adequate

and reliable guard consisting of its own troops, but that it cannot under any circumstances allow a foreign military unit to enter Moscow; it firmly hopes that the German Government, inspired by the same desire for peace, will not insist on its request.

In fact, the request to the Russian Government is in complete contradiction to the statement made by the Imperial Chancellor in the Reichstag that the unfortunate murder of Count Mirbach would not lead to a worsening of relations between the two countries. It also contradicts the wish that we know has been expressed by leading commercial and industrial circles to set up and develop close economic relations to the benefit of both countries; it contradicts the negotiations that have been proceeding successfully. Numerous statements made to our representative in Berlin concerning the political situation and the attitude to Russia also bear witness to this fact.

We still have every reason to hope that a favourable solution to this unexpected incident will be found, but whenever tension arises in our international relations we consider it necessary to make known the facts openly and make the issues clear.

I therefore consider it my duty to make the following Government statement:

"The Government of the Soviet Republic was well aware when it concluded the Brest peace what an onerous task the workers and peasants of Russia had been obliged to undertake owing to the international situation that had developed. The will of the overwhelming majority at the Fourth Congress of Soviets was perfectly clear; the working classes demanded peace because they needed a rest to be able to work, to organise the socialist economy, to recover and build up their strength, which had been undermined by an agonising war.

"In obedience to the will of the Congress the government has carried out the harsh terms of the Brest Treaty to the letter, and of late our negotiations with the German Government concerning the exact amount of the payments to be made by us, and the forms of payment, which we have decided to discharge as soon as possible, have made considerable progress.

"But while most scrupulously fulfilling the terms of Brest and upholding the will of the workers and peasants to have peace, the Soviet Government has never lost sight of the fact that there are limits beyond which even the most peace-loving masses of the working people will be compelled to rise, and will rise, as one man to defend their country with arms in hand.

"The senseless and criminal folly of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries has brought us to the brink of war. Our relations with the German Government were bound, despite our will, to become strained. We acknowledge the legitimacy of the German Government's desire to strengthen the guard over its Embassy and we have gone very far in order to satisfy this desire.

"But when we were informed of the German Government's desire, which is not yet formulated as a categorical demand, that we should allow a battalion of armed German soldiers in uniform access to Moscow, we replied—and we now repeat that reply before the highest body of the Soviet government of workers and peasants, before the All-Russia Central Executive Committee—that we could on no account and under no circumstances satisfy such a request, because this would be objectively the beginning of the occupation of Russia by foreign troops.

"To this action we would have been obliged to respond as we have responded to the Czechoslovak mutiny and to the military operations of the British in the North, namely—by expanded mobilisation, by the calling up of all adult workers and peasants for armed resistance, and for the destruction, in the event of a temporarily necessitated withdrawal, of absolutely every road and railway without exception, and also of stores, particularly food stores, so that they do not fall into the hands of the enemy. War would then be for us a fateful but absolute and unconditional necessity, and this would be a revolutionary war waged by the workers and peasants of Russia shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet government till the last breath.

"Like its foreign policy, the home policy of the Soviet government, in strict adherence to the decisions of the Fifth Congress of Soviets, remains unchanged. The criminal folly of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who have turned out

to be henchmen of the whiteguards, the landowners and the capitalists, will now that the clouds are gathering and the danger of war is increasing be even more criminal in the eyes of the people, and we shall fully and wholeheartedly support and carry out the ruthless punishment of the traitors who have been irrevocably condemned by the will of the Fifth Congress of Soviets. If war, in spite of all our efforts, becomes a fact, we shall be unable to maintain a shadow of trust in the gang of Left Socialist-Revolutionary traitors, who are capable of thwarting the will of the Soviets, resorting to military betrayal and the like. We shall draw fresh strength for war from the merciless suppression both of the madly reckless (Left Socialist-Revolutionary) and the class-conscious (landowner, capitalist and kulak) exponents of counter-revolution .

"To the workers and peasants of all Russia this is our appeal: 'Triple vigilance, caution and endurance, comrades! Everyone must be at his post! Everyone must give his life if necessary to defend Soviet power, to defend the interests of the working people, the exploited, the poor, to defend socialism!'"

Newspaper reports published on July 16, 1918 in *Pravda* No. 146 and in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 148

Published according to the text of the book: *Fifth Convocation of the All-Russia C.E.C. of the Soviets, Verbatim Report*. All-Russia C.E.C. Publishers, 1919; the Government Statement published according to the manu-

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC MEETING IN LEFORTOVO DISTRICT[197] JULY 19, 1918

The critical position of the Soviet Republic has two causes, home and foreign. We have never attempted to conceal from the workers and peasants how great was the burden of the shameful peace. Burdensome though it was, the Fourth Congress of Soviets deemed it essential to make this peace in order to afford the Russian workers and peasants a breathing-space and an opportunity to consolidate their position. The responsibility for the assassination of Mirbach lies at the door of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary party, which has brought Russia within an ace of doom.

There are signs that the German Government is prepared to come to terms and may renounce the dispatch of a battalion of German soldiers to Moscow. The Soviet Government has categorically rejected this request of the German Government, even if it leads to war.

The folly of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries has severely affected the position of Soviet power, but, on the other hand, one result has been that the best of them, the working people, are repudiating the Left Socialist-Revolutionary party.

The aggravation of relations with Germany has been accompanied by an aggravation of relations with the other coalition. The Czechoslovak revolt is its work. This is borne out in the case of the officers, who are being supported by French money and are assisting the Czechoslovaks.

Lenin went on to speak of the war, which is engendering revolution, and the longer it lasts, the more hopeless it makes the position of the belligerent countries and the

nearer it brings them to revolution. Germany and Austria have again been swept by a strike wave. All the imperialist sharks are hurling themselves on Russia and are bent on tearing her to pieces, for they know that every month of socialist Russia's existence brings them nearer to their own doom. To us has fallen the supreme honour and supreme difficulty of being the first socialist detachment in the fight against world imperialism. Our task is to hold on.

Lenin then went on to speak of the famine, which the whiteguards are banking on in order to overthrow the Soviet government. The monarchists, the kulaks, the moneybags are playing up the famine for all they are worth. They are not confining themselves to propaganda, but are corrupting the poor peasants, egging them on to profiteer and to fight the workers. Two classes are in conflict: the proletariat and the kulaks, the capitalists. One of these classes must win, and the other will be smashed. Our socialist revolution calls for an alliance of the class-conscious workers with the majority of the peasantry, the poor and middle peasants, to combat the kulaks and to establish the strictest order in the interests of the workers. We have one means of salvation from famine at our disposal, and that is a fighting alliance between the workers and the poor peasants to take away the grain from the kulaks and profiteers. Look the danger in the face! The enemy is everywhere, but we have new allies too—the proletariat of the countries where war is still being waged. We also have allies at home—the vast mass of the poor peasants, who will march shoulder to shoulder with the urban proletariat.

Pravda No. 151,
July 21, 1918

Published according to
the *Pravda* text

TO ZINOVIEV, LASHEVICH AND STASOVA

It is essential to move the *maximum* number of workers from Petrograd:

(1) some dozens of "leaders" (à la Kayurov)

(2) thousands of "rank and file".

Otherwise *we shall fall*, for the situation with the Czechoslovaks is *as bad as could be*.

In such a situation it is silly to "sit tight" on the "well-being" of Petrograd and to "grudge" giving from there: let the Bolshevik majority in the Petrograd Soviet of Deputies even fall from 98 per cent (have you 98 per cent?) to 51 per cent! What does it matter!

We shall not perish *even* (even!) if in Petrograd the number of those not ours in the Soviet of Deputies goes up to 49 per cent (if ever this does happen). But we shall certainly *perish* owing to the Czechoslovaks unless we make *desperate* efforts to add hundreds and thousands of *leading* workers in order to convert the jelly into something solid. This is not an exaggeration but an accurate appraisal. *You* will be responsible for our perishing if you are miserly and keep back "for Petrograd".

Greetings! Yours, *Lenin*

P.S. Reply!

July 20, 1918

First published in 1942 in *Lenin Miscellany XXXIV*

Published according to the manuscript

REPORT DELIVERED AT A MOSCOW GUBERNIA CONFERENCE OF FACTORY COMMITTEES[198] JULY 23, 1918

NEWSPAPER REPORT

(*Lenin's appearance in the conference hall was greeted with loud applause, which continued for several minutes.*) These past few days have been marked by an extreme aggravation of the affairs of the Soviet Republic, caused both by the country's position internationally and by the counter-revolutionary plots and the food crisis which is closely connected with them.

Allow me to dwell on the international situation. The Russian revolution is only one of the contingents of the international socialist army, on the action of which the success and triumph of our revolution depends. This is a fact which none of us lose sight of. We likewise bear in mind that the vanguard role of the Russian proletariat in the world working-class movement is not due to the economic development of the country. On the contrary, it is the backwardness of Russia, the inability of what is called our native bourgeoisie to cope with the enormous problems connected with the war and its cessation that have led the proletariat to seize political power and establish its own class dictatorship.

Aware of the isolation of its revolution, the Russian proletariat clearly realises that an essential condition and prime requisite for its victory is the united action of the workers of the whole world, or of several capitalistically advanced countries. But the Russian proletariat knows perfectly well that it has both avowed and unavowed friends in every country. For example, there is no country where the prisons are not crammed with internationalists who

sympathise with Soviet Russia; there is no country where revolutionary socialist thought has not found expression in either the open or underground press. And therefore, knowing our true friends, we refuse to come to any understanding with the Mensheviks, who supported Kerensky and his offensive. Very significant in this latter connection is a letter (small in size but distinctly internationalist in substance) from the internationalist Rosa Luxemburg, which appeared in the British paper the *Workers' Dreadnought*[199] on the subject of the June offensive. Rosa Luxemburg holds that the internationalism of the Great Russian Revolution was undermined by Kerensky's offensive and by the sanction and approval given to it by the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets. This offensive of revolutionary Russia retarded the development of the revolution in the West, and it was only the dictatorship of the proletariat, its assumption of the entire power, that led to the frustration of the secret treaties and the exposure of their predatory, imperialist character, and, hence, to the acceleration of revolutionary developments in Europe. An equally powerful influence in awakening and developing proletarian energies in the West was exercised by our appeal to all the nations for the conclusion of a democratic peace without annexations or indemnities.* All these revolutionary acts opened the eyes of the workers of the whole world, and no efforts on the part of the bourgeois and renegade socialist groups will succeed in obscuring their awakened class consciousness. The reception given to Kerensky by the British workers shows this quite clearly. The attraction exercised by the Russian revolution found expression in the first action of the German workers on a grand scale since the outbreak of the war, when they reacted to the Brest negotiations by a gigantic strike in Berlin and other industrial centres. This action of the proletariat in a country doped by the fumes of nationalism and intoxicated with the poison of chauvinism is a fact of cardinal importance and marks a turn of sentiment among the German proletariat.

We cannot say what course the revolutionary movement in Germany will take. One thing is certain, and that is the

* See present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 249-53.—*Ed.*

existence of a tremendous revolutionary force there that must by iron necessity make its presence felt. There is no reason to blame the German workers for not making a revolution. One might with equal justice have blamed the Russian workers for not manufacturing a revolution during the ten years 1907-1917. But that, we know, would be wrong. Revolutions are not made to order, they cannot be timed for any particular moment; they mature in a process of historical development and break out at a moment determined by a whole complex of internal and external causes. That moment is close at hand and is bound to come, inevitably and unavoidably. It was easier for us to start the revolution, but it is extremely difficult to continue it and consummate it. It is terribly difficult to make a revolution in such a highly developed country as Germany, with its splendidly organised bourgeoisie, but all the easier will it be to triumphantly consummate the socialist revolution once it flares up and spreads in the advanced capitalist countries of Europe.

There is no reason to blame us for concluding the Brest Treaty—humiliating, distressful and brutal though it is—or to regard it as a complete renunciation of our ideals and an act of allegiance to German imperialism. It is characteristic that these accusations come from the bourgeois circles and compromiser-socialists, who in the Ukraine, Finland and the Caucasus (the Mensheviks) are today greeting the German Junkers with open arms. Similar accusations are showered upon our heads by the empty-headed Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. We are perfectly aware of the distressful nature of the Brest Treaty. We are also aware that under this brutal treaty we shall have to pay Germany about 6,000,000,000 rubles, according to the calculations of our economic delegation now in Berlin. The situation is undoubtedly a hard one, but a way out can and must be found by the joint efforts of the proletariat and the poor peasants. And the mad attempt of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to embroil us in war by assassinating Mirbach is not the way to escape from the Brest Treaty. On the contrary, this act of folly played into the hands of the German war parties, whose position, naturally, is bound to be weakened by the growth of defeatism not only among the German

workers, but also among the bourgeoisie. For now, after the Brest peace, it is clear and obvious to everybody that Germany is waging a predatory war for definitely imperialist aims.

The food situation in Soviet Russia, surrounded as she is on all sides by imperialist plunderers and with ever alert counter-revolutionaries within the country supporting them, is very grave.

The attention of the working class must be directed to combating famine, the bourgeoisie's most effective means of fighting the proletarian dictatorship. But one thing we must take as our fundamental precept: in combating famine, we will categorically renounce the bourgeois methods of struggle, the method of starving the masses in the interests of the money-bags and parasites, and will resort to purely socialist methods. And these consist in introducing a grain monopoly and establishing fixed prices in the interests of the workers.

The bourgeoisie and its followers, the compromiser-socialists, are advocating freedom of trade and the abolition of the fixed prices. But freedom of trade has already displayed its fruits in a number of cities. No sooner were the bourgeoisie in power than the price of grain increased several times over, and as a result that commodity disappeared from the market; it was hidden away by the kulaks in the hope of a further rise of prices.

The most desperate enemy of the proletariat and Soviet Russia is famine. But in its efforts to vanquish it, the proletariat comes into collision with the rural bourgeoisie, which, far from having any interest in putting an end to the famine, derives advantage from it for its own group and class. The proletariat must bear this in mind and, in alliance with the starving peasant poor, must start a desperate and uncompromising struggle against the rural kulaks. With the same purpose in view, the organisation of food detachments already begun should be continued, and at the head of them should be placed honest Communists who enjoy the confidence of the Party and trade union organisations. Only then will the food problem be solved and the cause of the revolution saved.

Published in *Pravda* No. 153
and in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 155,
July 24, 1918

Published according to
the *Pravda* text, collated
with the *Izvestia* text

CONVERSATION WITH J. V. STALIN BY DIRECT LINE JULY 24, 1918

TSARITSYN, TO STALIN

Lenin speaking.

Can you transmit to Baku a wireless telegram just received from Tashkent:

. . . . . .

Next about food, I must tell you that today none at all is being issued; neither in Petrograd nor in Moscow. The situation is very bad. Inform us whether you can take extraordinary measures, for there is nowhere we can get anything except from you. In Yaroslavl the rising of the Whites has been put down. Simbirsk has been captured by the Whites or Czechs. I await your reply.

STALIN'S REPLY

Two nights ago we sent to Turkestan all that could be sent.

The wireless message has been transmitted to Baku. There are large stocks of grain in the North Caucasus, but the railway line being cut prevents sending them to the North.

Until the line is restored delivery of grain is out of the question. An expedition has been sent to Samara and Saratov gubernias, but it will not be possible to help you with grain within the next few days. We hope to restore the line in about ten days. Hold out somehow, distribute meat and fish, which we can send you in plenty. In a week's time things will be better.

Stalin

TSARITSYN, TO STALIN

Send fish, meat, vegetables, any kind of produce, whatever you can and as much as you can.

Lenin

First published in 1931
in *Lenin Miscellany XVIII*

Published according to
the manuscript; J. V. Stalin's
reply according to the text
of the telegram

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A MEETING IN KHAMOVNIKI DISTRICT[200] JULY 26, 1918

BRIEF NEWSPAPER REPORT

(*Lenin was welcomed with cheers and loud applause.*) Speaking on the subject, "What the Soviet Constitution Will Mean to the Working People", Lenin noted that the Soviet Constitution, which, like the Soviets, had been created in a period of revolutionary struggle, was the first to proclaim the government power of the working people and to disfranchise the exploiters—the enemies of the building of a new life. This was the chief thing that distinguished it from the constitutions of other countries, and it was a pledge of ultimate victory over capital.

Referring to some of the chief principles of the Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People, Lenin said that the working people of all countries would see that the Soviet Constitution—the fundamental law of the Russian Socialist Federative Republic—reflected the ideals of the proletariat of the whole world. "The hour of reckoning with the bourgeoisie of all countries is approaching! Indignation is growing in Western Europe! The task before us is to overcome all obstacles in our path, however difficult they may be, and to maintain the power of the Soviets until the working class of all countries revolts and raises aloft the great banner of a world socialist republic!" (*Loud applause.*)

Pravda No. 157,
July 28, 1918

Published according to the *Pravda* text

BY DIRECT LINE
TO ZINOVIEV, THE SMOLNY, PETROGRAD

News has just been received that Alexeyev in the Kuban area, with about sixty thousand men, is advancing against us, carrying out the plan for a combined attack by the Czechoslovaks, the British and the Alexeyev Cossacks. In view of this, and in view of the statement of the Petrograd workers, Kayurov, Chugurin and others, who have arrived here, that Petrograd could provide ten times as many if it were not for the opposition of the Petrograd section of the C.C.—in view of this I categorically and imperatively insist on the cessation of all opposition and on the dispatch from Petrograd of ten times as many workers. That is the demand of the C.C. of the Party.

I categorically warn you that the Republic is in a dangerous situation and that the Petrograders, by holding up dispatch of workers from Petrograd to the Czech front, will make themselves responsible for the possible downfall of our whole cause.

Lenin

N.B. Return me this paper with a note *of the time* it was transmitted to the Smolny in Petrograd.

Lenin

Written July 27, 1918
First published in 1948
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXIV*

Published according to
the manuscript

NOTES

[1] With this article, published in *Pravda* on February 21, 1918, Lenin launched a public campaign in the press for the conclusion of peace. p. 19

[2] The reference is to the voting on the question of peace at the meetings of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) on January 11 (24)* and on February 17, 1918. At the first meeting two members of the Central Committee voted in favour of a revolutionary war; at the second meeting no votes were cast in favour of this proposal. Those in favour of continuing the war abstained from voting. p. 21

[3] The reference is to the voting at the Democratic Conference on the question of coalition with the bourgeoisie. Lenin analyses the results of the voting in his work *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?* "The latest returns of the voting by 'curias' *for* and *against* coalition with the bourgeoisie in Tsereteli's 'Bulygin Duma', i.e., in the notorious 'Democratic' Conference, constitute one of the objective and incontrovertible proofs of this. If we take the Soviets' curias we get:

	For coalition	Against
Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies	83	192
Soviets of Peasants' Deputies	102	70
All Soviets	185	262

So, the majority as a whole is on the side of the proletarian slogan: against coalition with the bourgeoisie." (See present edition, Vol. 26, p. 97.)

The *All-Russia Democratic Conference* was held by the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary Central Executive Committee of the Soviets ostensibly to decide who should rule the country. The organisers' real aim, however, was to distract the attention of the masses of the people from the mounting revo-

* The new calendar was introduced on February 21, 1918. Dates up to the reform are indicated in both Old and New Styles, the New Style date appearing in brackets.

lution. The conference took place from September 14 to 22 (September 27 to October 5), 1917 in Petrograd. It was attended by more than 1,500 people. The Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders did all they could to weaken worker and peasant representation and to increase the number of delegates from the various petty-bourgeois and bourgeois organisations, thus ensuring themselves a majority at the conference. The Bolsheviks took part in the conference in order to use it as a platform for exposing the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. p. 25

[4] This is a reference to the defeatism of Zinoviev and Kamenev, who opposed armed uprising in October 1917. p. 26

[5] The reference is to the occupation of Belgium by German troops for nearly four years during the world war of 1914-18. p. 27

[6] *Novy Luch* (New Ray)—organ of the Mensheviks' combined Central Committee. The newspaper began publication in Petrograd on December 1 (14), 1917 under the editorship of Dan, Martov, Martynov and others. It was closed down in June 1918 for counter-revolutionary agitation. The reference here is to the Mensheviks associated with the paper. p. 27

[7] *Dyelo Naroda* (People's Cause)—organ of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, first published in Petrograd, then in Samara and Moscow. It appeared irregularly and under various titles from March 1917 to March 1919. The reference here is to the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries associated with the paper. p. 27

[8] *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life) began publication in April 1917 in Petrograd. The group connected with the paper referred to here consisted of Menshevik supporters of Martov, who called themselves internationalists, and of lone intellectuals of a semi-Menshevik orientation. In October 1917 this group threw in its lot with the rest of the Mensheviks in opposing the armed uprising; after the October Revolution, with the exception of a few individuals who joined the Bolsheviks, it took up a hostile attitude to Soviet power. In July 1918 *Novaya Zhizn* was closed down along with other counter-revolutionary newspapers. p. 27

[9] "Left Bolsheviks", or "Left Communists"—an anti-Party group formed at the beginning of 1918 during the controversy over concluding peace with Germany. The "Left Communists", like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, opposed peace negotiations and upheld the adventuristic policy of involving the young Soviet Republic, which as yet had no army, in "revolutionary war" against imperialist Germany. The group was led by Bukharin, Radek and Pyatakov. The "Left Communists" and Trotsky, who pursued the line of continuing the war in a more oblique and disguised form under the slogan of "not waging war but not concluding peace either", attempted to impose on the Party a policy that would

have led to the destruction of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin called the "Left Communists" an "instrument of imperialist provocation". With Trotsky's support the "Left Communists" launched an open campaign against the Party line and caused disorganisation by resigning from their posts in the Party and the Soviets, and so on. Lenin and his associates had a hard struggle in the Central Committee against Trotsky and the "Left Communists" to achieve a decision in favour of concluding peace with Germany and thus save the young Soviet Republic from destruction. Under Lenin's leadership the Party came out firmly against the provocatory policy of Trotsky and the "Left Communists"; the "Left Communists" were isolated and routed. p. 28

[10] This decree was passed by the Council of People's Commissars on February 21, 1918 and published on February 22 in *Pravda* and *Izvestia TsIK*. It was also issued as a separate pamphlet. p. 30

[11] This article was written by Lenin in connection with the opposition, expressed by the "Left Communists" at a meeting of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) on February 22, 1918, to acquiring arms and food supplies from Britain and France for purposes of defence against the German imperialists. When the Council of People's Commissars discussed the question on February 21, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries opposed the use of aid from the Allies and the following resolution was passed: "In view of the disagreement concerning the negotiations with the Allied Powers for supplying the country with food and military equipment the meeting shall be adjourned for the groups to consult among themselves."

Lenin was not present at the discussion of this question in the Central Committee on February 22, but he sent the following statement: "To the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. Please include my vote in favour of accepting potatoes and arms from the bandits of Anglo-French imperialism." By 6 votes to 5 the Central Committee passed a resolution in which it acknowledged that it was permissible for the purpose of arming and providing the revolutionary army with the necessary supplies to acquire such supplies from the governments of capitalist countries, while maintaining complete independence in foreign policy.

After the vote Bukharin tendered his resignation from the Central Committee and the editorship of *Pravda*. In addition, eleven "Left Communists"—Lomov (Oppokov), Uritsky, Bukharin, Bubnov, Pyatakov and others—submitted a statement to the Central Committee charging the Central Committee with capitulating to the international bourgeoisie, and stating that they would conduct extensive agitation against the policy of the Central Committee.

The same day the question of obtaining arms and food supplies from the Allied Powers was again discussed, this time by the Council of People's Commissars, which decided in favour of obtaining them. p. 36

[12] *Kalyayev, I. P.* (1871-1905)—a member of the combat group of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, took part in a number of terroristic acts. On February 4 (17), 1905 he assassinated the Governor General of Moscow, the Grand Duke S. A. Romanov, uncle of Nicholas II. He was executed at Schlüsselburg on May 10 (23). p. 37

[13] A joint meeting of the Bolshevik and Left Socialist-Revolutionary groups in the All-Russia Central Executive Committee was held in the evening of February 23, 1918 to discuss the question of accepting the new German peace terms. The atmosphere at the meeting was extremely tense. After a report on the situation at the front by the Supreme Commander N. V. Krylenko, who announced that the army was demobilising spontaneously, K. B. Radek, D. B. Ryazanov and the Left Socialist-Revolutionary I. Z. Steinberg spoke against concluding peace. Lenin spoke in favour of concluding peace.

No decisions were taken at the meeting.

The joint meeting of the two groups was followed by a meeting of the Bolshevik group of the All-Russia C.E.C. The "Left Communists" demanded freedom to vote as they pleased at the forthcoming meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C., but this demand was rejected by the group and a majority decision was taken to vote at the All-Russia C.E.C. meeting in favour of concluding peace. p. 42

[14] The meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. to discuss the question of making peace with Germany opened on February 24, 1918 at 3 a.m. under the chairmanship of Y. M. Sverdlov. During the debate on Lenin's report the conclusion of peace was opposed by representatives of the Mensheviks, the Right and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the anarchists. By 116 votes to 85, with 26 abstentions, the meeting passed the Bolshevik resolution on accepting the German peace terms. The majority of the "Left Communists" did not participate in the voting and left the hall while it was being taken. p. 43

[15] The reference is to N. V. Krylenko's appeal to the troops quoted in Lenin's article "Bolshevism and 'Demoralisation' of the Army". Lenin's article was published in *Pravda* No. 72, June 3 (16), 1917. p. 44

[16] This article examines the statement submitted to the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) on February 22 by the "Left Communists" and signed by a group of members of the Central Committee and People's Commissars—A. Lomov (G. I. Oppokov), M. S. Uritsky, N. I. Bukharin, A. S. Bubnov, V M. Smirnov, I. N. Stukov, M. G. Bronsky, V N. Yakovleva, A. P. Spunde, M. N. Pokrovsky and G. L. Pyatakov.

The copy of the statement on which Lenin made notes in preparation for quoting it in his article has not survived. p. 48

[17] The reference is to the Peace of Tilsit signed in July 1807 between France and Prussia, which imposed onerous and humiliating obligations on Prussia. Prussia lost a large part of her territory and was compelled to pay an indemnity of 100 million francs; she also undertook to reduce her army to 40,000 men, to provide auxiliaries for Napoleon on demand, and to cease trading with England. p. 51

[18] Lenin refers to the inquiry telegraphed by the Council of People's Commissars and the All-Russia C.E.C. to all gubernia and uyezd Soviets and to all gubernia, uyezd and volost land committees, requesting them to communicate as quickly as possible their attitude to the signing of the peace terms offered by the German Government. The inquiry was sent out on the basis of a decision passed by the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) on Lenin's proposal of February 23, 1918. The inquiry described the German peace terms and stated that the All-Russia C.E.C. had accepted them; the results of the voting in the All-Russia C.E.C. were quoted and the two points of view on the question of making peace were set forth.

Lenin made a close study of the answers received. In an article for *Komsomolskaya Pravda* No. 56, March 6, 1928 entitled "Vladimir Ilyich and the Treaty of Brest", B. Malkin wrote: "I remember how on the next day (after the inquiry had been sent out—*Ed.*) I brought Vladimir Ilyich some replies we had received by direct line. He quickly sorted them out between industrial and peasant centres and declared immediately: 'It is perfectly clear that the villages don't want to fight. A special inquiry must be made of all the volosts, then the picture will be perfectly clear.' On behalf of the Council of People's Commissars and the All-Russia C.E.C., express telegrams of inquiry were sent out even to the volosts, In the following fortnight replies began to come in from all over Russia."

These replies were published in *Izvestia VTsIK* between February 28 and March 8. Lenin kept a record of the replies, grouping them under the headings, "For Peace" and "For War' (see *Lenin Miscellany XI*, pp. 59-60 and *XXXVI*, p. 30).

In the final table, which Lenin evidently compiled on the eve of the Seventh Party Congress, the following data are cited:

	For peace	For war		For peace				For war
26.II	60	61	replies					
27.II	54	24	received					
28.II	26	23	by					
1.III	9	7	C.P.C.	155	+	119	=	274
2.III	6	4	and	95	+	105	=	200
Total:	155	119	C.E.C.	Σ = 250	+	224	=	474
3.III				167	+	128	=	295
4.III and 5.III	12	9		95	+	105	=	200
	167	128		262	+	233	=	495

p. 55

[19] On February 25 the "Left Communists" announced that "for as long as the C.C. and the C.P.C. are compelled to take a defensive line, we shall refrain from putting our decision into practice". When the peace was signed, however, they reaffirmed their withdrawal from the Central Committee and "responsible posts". p. 56

[20] In the document "Position of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks) on the Question of the Separate and Annexationist Peace" the first and the two concluding paragraphs were written by Y. M. Sverdlov. p. 58

[21] Lenin has in mind the joint meeting of the Bolshevik and Left Socialist-Revolutionary groups of the All-Russia C.E.C. on February 23, 1918. p. 63

[22] The question of the evacuation of the Government and government institutions from Petrograd to Moscow in view of the German offensive on Pskov was discussed at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars on February 26, 1918. With minor amendments Lenin's draft decision was accepted by the Council of People's Commissars. The final decision on making Moscow the capital of the Soviet Republic was taken by the Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets in March 1918. p. 67

[23] This refers to the voting on the question of peace with Germany at a meeting of the Party Central Committee representing various trends in the Party on January 21 (February 3), 1918. Two "Left Communists", Osinsky (Obolensky) and Stukov, voted against any possibility of peace between socialist and imperialist countries. The majority of the "Left Communists", however, took an ambivalent stand. While admitting the possibility of peace being concluded between socialist and imperialist states, they voted against the immediate conclusion of peace with Germany (see *Minutes of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.*(*B.*), August 1917 to February 1918, 1958, pp. 190-91). p. 71

[24] *Kommunist*—a daily newspaper issued by the "Left Communists" in Petrograd from March 5 to March 19, 1918 as the "organ of the St. Petersburg Committee and the St. Petersburg Area Committee of the R.S.D.L.P." Only eleven issues appeared. Publication was ceased by decision of the Petrograd City Party Conference of March 20, 1918. The conference stated that the policy of the Petrograd Committee, as expressed in the newspaper *Kommunist*, was deeply erroneous, and that it completely failed to reflect the attitude of the Petrograd organisation of the Communist Party. The conference declared *Petrogradskaya Pravda* to be the organ of the Petrograd Party organisation in place of *Kommunist*. p. 79

[25] On February 24, 1918 the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies passed a resolution approving the decision of the All-Russia C.E.C., which stated that the conclusion of peace was

essential as "the only way out of the present grave situation". At the same time the Petrograd Soviet decided "to take all necessary measures to organise troop trains to be sent to the front". p. 83

[26] At a meeting of the Moscow Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies in Moscow on March 3, 1918, in which factory committees, trade unions, district Soviets, responsible officials and others took part, the majority of those present spoke in favour of peace. On March 4 the question of peace was discussed at a meeting of the Moscow Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.); by 10 votes to 7 a resolution in favour of making peace was passed. On the night of March 4, a Moscow city conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) was held at which a large number of workers were also present, besides the delegates. The majority at the conference voted for a resolution approving the position of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) on the question of peace. p. 83

[27] The Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), the Communist Party's first Congress after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, was held March 6-8, 1918 in the Taurida Palace in Petrograd to decide the question of concluding peace with Germany, over which a fierce internal controversy had sprung up within the Party.

Lenin and the members of the Central Committee who supported him were striving to bring Soviet Russia out of the imperialist war. The principles on which Lenin's position was based were most fully expressed in his *Theses on the Question of the Immediate Conclusion of a Separate and Annexationist Peace* (see present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 442-50). The conclusion of the Brest peace was opposed by a group of "Left Communists" led by N. I. Bukharin. L. D. Trotsky took up a position close to that of the "Left Communists". The "Left Communists", who held leading posts in the Moscow, Petrograd, Urals and some other Party organisations, launched a violent campaign against Lenin's policy. The Moscow Regional Bureau passed a resolution expressing distrust of the Party Central Committee and made what Lenin described as the "strange and monstrous" statement (see this volume, pp. 68-75) that it would be expedient in the interests of international revolution to "accept the possibility of losing Soviet power". The adventuristic slogans of the "Left Communists" were rejected by the majority of lower Party organisations. By the time the Congress took place Lenin's policy of concluding peace enjoyed the support of the majority of Party organisations.

Such were the conditions in which the Congress assembled. Of the delegates attending the Congress 47 had a vote and 59 had a voice but no vote; they represented over 170,000 Party members, including members of the big Party organisations—Moscow, Petrograd, Urals and Volga Region. By the time the Congress opened the Party numbered nearly 300,000 members (50 per cent more than at the time of the Sixth Congress). But a considerable number of

organisations were unable to send delegates because of the haste with which the Congress was assembled, or were unable to do so because of the temporary occupation of various parts of the country by the Germans.

The agenda and procedure were considered on March 5 at a preliminary meeting of delegates. At this first meeting the Congress approved the following agenda: report of the Central Committee; the question of war and peace; revision of the Programme and changing the name of the Party; organisational matters; election of the Central Committee.

Lenin directed all the work of the Congress. He delivered the Central Committee's political report and the report on revision of the Programme and changing the name of the Party, and took part in discussing all questions on the agenda. Altogether he spoke 18 times.

After the Central Committee's political report the leader of the "Left Communists" Bukharin delivered the second report, in which he upheld the adventuristic demand for war with Germany.

Eighteen delegates took part in the hard-hitting debate on the two reports. Lenin was supported by Y. M. Sverdlov, F. A. Sergeyev (Artyom), I. T. Smilga, the delegate from Yaroslavl Rozanova, and others. Some of the "Left Communists" were moved by the force of Lenin's arguments to revise their position.

Having unanimously approved the Central Committee's report, the Congress went on to discuss the resolution on war and peace. The Congress rejected the "Theses on the Present Situation", which had been submitted as a resolution by the "Left Communists". A signed vote was taken and by 30 votes to 12 with 4 abstentions Lenin's resolution on the Brest peace was passed (see this volume, pp. 118-19).

The Congress discussed the question of revising the Programme and changing the name of the Party. Lenin delivered a report on these subjects. The basis of his report was his "Rough Outline of the Draft Programme" (see this volume, pp. 152-58), which had been handed round to the delegates at the beginning of the Congress. Lenin pointed out that the name of the Party should reflect its aims, and proposed renaming the Party the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and altering its Programme. The Congress voted unanimously in favour of Lenin's resolution and approved his proposal for the name of the Party. The Congress elected a seven-man commission headed by Lenin to draw up the final version of the new Programme.

By a secret vote the Congress elected a Central Committee consisting of 15 members and 8 candidates. The "Left Communists" N. I. Bukharin, A. Lomov (G. I. Oppokov) and M. S. Uritsky, who were elected to the Central Committee, stated at the Congress that they would not work in the Central Committee, and did not begin work there for several months in spite of the insistent demands of the Central Committee.

The Seventh Party Congress was of immense historical importance. It affirmed the correctness of the Leninist principles of the

foreign policy to be pursued by the Soviet State, the policy of gaining a peaceful respite; it routed the disorganisers of the Party, the "Left Communists" and the Trotskyites, and set the Communist Party and the working class to solve the basic tasks of socialist construction. The decisions of the Congress were widely discussed in the local Party organisations and were generally approved in spite of the continued disrupting activities of the "Left Communists".

The Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which was held soon afterwards (March 14-16), ratified the Peace Treaty of Brest. p. 85

[28] On April 18,1917, Milyukov, the Foreign Minister of the bourgeois Provisional Government, circulated a Note to the Allied Powers stating that the Provisional Government would observe all the tsarist treaties and undertook to continue the imperialist war. On April 20 the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison, on learning about Milyukov's Note, demonstrated in the streets with the slogans "All power to the Soviets" and "Down with war". On April 21 the Petrograd workers in response to a call made by the Bolshevik Party stopped work and held a demonstration. The chief demand of the 100,000 demonstrators was for peace. By confronting the broad masses with the question of "who to support?" and showing that only the working class by taking power could put an end to the war, the April demonstration hastened the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. The bourgeoisie replied to it with the new manoeuvre of forming a coalition government in which Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries participated. p. 87

[29] Lenin refers to the demonstration in Petrograd of July 3-4 (16-17), 1917. Spontaneous demonstrations against the Provisional Government began in Vyborg District on July 3 (16). The 1st Machine-Gun Regiment was the first to demonstrate. It was joined by other army units and factory workers. The demonstration threatened to develop into an armed attack on the Provisional Government.

At this time the Bolshevik Party was against an armed uprising because it considered that the revolutionary crisis had not yet matured, that the army and the provinces were not ready to support an uprising in the capital. At a joint meeting of the Central Committee with the Petrograd Committee and the Military Organisation of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) at 4 p.m. on July 3 (16), it was decided to refrain from armed action. The Second Petrograd City Conference of Bolsheviks, which was being held simultaneously, took an analogous decision. The conference delegates went out to the factories and various districts of the city to restrain the masses from taking armed action. But the uprising had already begun and it could not be stopped.

Taking into account the mood of the masses, the Central Committee in consultation with the Petrograd Committee and the Military Organisation decided late in the evening on July 3 (16) to

participate in the demonstration in order to give it an organised and peaceful character. Lenin, who was not in Petrograd at the time, came straight to the capital when he heard what was happening. He arrived in the morning on July 4 (17). More than 500,000 people took part in the demonstration of July 4 (17), which was conducted under the main slogan of the Bolsheviks, "All power to the Soviets".

With the knowledge and consent of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary Central Executive Committee, detachments of officers and officer cadets were sent against the peacefully demonstrating workers and soldiers, and opened fire on the demonstrators. Counter-revolutionary military units were recalled from the front to smash the revolutionary movement.

On the night of July 4 (17) the Bolshevik Central Committee decided to halt the demonstration. Late at night Lenin visited the *Pravda* editorial office to look at the current issue; half an hour after he left, the office was wrecked by a detachment of officer cadets and Cossacks.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, in effect, aided and abetted the counter-revolution. Having helped to smash the demonstration, they associated themselves with the bourgeoisie in attacking the Bolshevik Party. The Bolshevik newspapers *Pravda*, *Soldatskaya Pravda* and others were banned by the Provisional Government. Mass arrests, searches and pogroms began. The revolutionary units of the Petrograd garrison were withdrawn from the capital and sent to the front.

After the July Days the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government took over complete control of the country and the Soviets were reduced to the role of a helpless appendage. The period of dual power was over, the peaceful state of the revolution was also over. The Bolsheviks were now faced with the task of preparing an armed uprising for the overthrow of the Provisional Government. p. 87

[30] *Kornilov revolt*—a counter-revolutionary conspiracy organised in August 1917 by the Russian bourgeoisie and landowners and led by the tsarist general Kornilov. On August 25 Kornilov began withdrawing troops from the front to march against Petrograd. In response to a Bolshevik appeal the common people rose against Kornilov. The workers of Petrograd took up arms and began to form detachments of Red Guards. The attempt at counter-revolution was quickly crushed and Kornilov himself arrested. p. 88

[31] The reference is to the defeatist position taken up by L. B. Kamenev, G. Y. Zinoviev, A. I. Rykov and certain other members of the Central Committee of the Party and the Soviet Government, who after the October Socialist Revolution supported the Socialist-Revolutionary demand for the setting up of a "homogeneous socialist government" (see present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 275-82, 301-07). p. 88

[32] The April (Seventh) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) was held in Petrograd April 24-29 (May 7-12), 1917. The conference was attended by 133 delegates with a vote and 18 delegates with a voice but no vote, representing 80,000 Party members. This was the first legal Bolshevik conference with the importance of a Party Congress.

The April Conference took Lenin's April Theses as the basis for its work, defined the Party line on all basic questions of the revolution and set the Party the aim of fighting for the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. p. 88

[33] Kaledin, A. M. (1861-1918) was a tsarist general. At the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918 he became one of the leaders of the monarchist counter-revolution and organiser of the Civil War against Soviet power on the River Don. When defeated in January 1918, he shot himself. p. 91

[34] This argument against the signing of the peace terms dictated by Germany was put forward by the "Left Communists" at a meeting of members of the Central Committee with Party workers on January 8 (21), 1918. V. V. Obolensky (N. Osinsky) asserted that "the German soldier will not agree to take part in an offensive", and Y. A. Preobrazhensky tried to prove that the German army was "technically incapable of advancing: winter, no roads...". The wrongness and harmfulness of such arguments was exposed by Lenin in his article "The Revolutionary Phrase" (see this volume, pp. 19-29). p. 94

[35] Soon after the publication of Lenin's Decree on Peace, which was passed by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the Soviet Government sent a Note to the Entente powers proposing the immediate conclusion of an armistice on all fronts and the starting of peace negotiations. The refusal of the imperialists of the Entente to support the initiative of the Soviet Government and their active opposition to the conclusion of peace compelled the Council of People's Commissars to begin separate peace negotiations with Germany. After preliminary negotiations and the conclusion of an armistice, the peace conference opened at Brest-Litovsk on December 9 (22), 1917. It was attended by a delegation from Soviet Russia and a delegation from the powers of the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey). At the conference the Soviet delegation made a declaration, based on the propositions of the Decree on Peace, setting forth proposals for the conclusion of a just and democratic peace without annexations and indemnities. After going through a series of manoeuvres, the delegation from the German bloc stated that the Soviet proposals were inacceptable and on January 5 (18), 1918 offered Soviet Russia onerous and predatory peace terms stipulating that Poland, Lithuania and parts of Latvia, Estonia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia should be placed under German control.

On January 8 (21), 1918 at a meeting between members of the Central Committee and Party workers Lenin gave detailed arguments proving the need to conclude peace even on these onerous terms. These arguments were expounded in his "Theses on the Question of the Immediate Conclusion of a Separate and Annexationist Peace" (see present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 442-44). Questions of war and peace were discussed at meetings of the Central Committee on January 11 (24), January 19 (February 1), January 21 (February 3), and on February 18, 22, 23 and 24, 1918. To prevent the collapse of the peace negotiations and to stop the adventuristic policy of the "Left Communists" and Trotsky being put into effect, Lenin got the Central Committee of the Party to pass a decision on the need for sustaining the peace negotiations for as long as possible and signing the peace terms only if the Germans should present an ultimatum. On January 27 (February 9), however, when the Germans demanded in the form of an ultimatum that the Soviet delegation should sign the peace terms they had proposed on January 5 (18), Trotsky, who was leading the Soviet delegation at this stage, ignored the Central Committee's decision and in spite of Lenin's demand refused to sign the peace treaty while stating simultaneously that Russia would cease waging war and would demobilise her army.

The German imperialists took advantage of this. On February 18, German troops broke the armistice agreement and launched an offensive all along the Russo-German front. The same day, on Lenin's insistence the Party Central Committee passed a decision to sign the peace treaty with Germany. But on February 22, imperialist Germany presented a fresh ultimatum stipulating even more onerous and humiliating peace terms: in addition to the territory they had occupied the Germans demanded that Soviet Russia should cede provinces of Latvia and Estonia that were not in German hands, and that she should conclude peace with the Ukrainian Central Rada, withdraw Soviet troops from the Ukraine and Finland, pay Germany a huge indemnity and demobilise her army. On February 23 the Central Committee came out in favour of Lenin's proposal to conclude peace immediately on the terms proposed by Germany. On the morning of February 24, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and then the Council of People's Commissars decided to accept the new peace terms, and this was immediately made known to the German Government. On March 1, 1918 the peace negotiations were reopened and the Peace Treaty was signed on March 3.

The revolution in Germany of November 1918 deposed Kaiser Wilhelm II and the Soviet Government was able to annul the Treaty of Brest. p. 96

[36] The Soviet Government published the secret diplomatic papers and the secret treaties between the tsarist government (and subsequently the bourgeois Provisional Government) of Russia and the governments of Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Austria-Hungary and other imperialist powers, On November 10 (23), 1917

the newspapers began publishing these secret diplomatic papers and treaties, which afterwards appeared in the *Collections of Secret Documents from the Archives of the Former Ministry for Foreign Affairs*. Seven of these collections came out between December 1917 and February 1918. p. 97

[37] The reference is to the signed oath of loyalty to the tsar that was obligatory for deputies of the Third State Duma. Since refusal to take this oath meant losing the platform in the Duma that was needed to mobilise the proletariat for revolutionary struggle, the Social-Democrat deputies signed the oath along with the rest of the members of the Duma. p. 100

[38] The term "field revolution on a world-wide scale" was used by V. V. Obolensky (N. Osinsky) in the "Theses on the Question of War and Peace", which he wrote for the meeting of the Party Central Committee on January 21 (February 3), 1918 and published on March 14 in the "Left Communist" newspaper *Kommunist* No. 8. Explaining what he meant by this term, Obolensky wrote: "Revolutionary war, as a field civil war, cannot resemble in character the regular military actions of national armies when they are carrying out strategic operations.... Military action assumes the character of guerrilla warfare (analogous to barricade fighting) and is mixed with class agitation." p. 102

[39] *Hoffmann, Max* (1869-1927)—German general and prominent figure in German reactionary militarist circles. In September 1916 he became Chief of Staff and, in effect, was in command of the German forces on the Eastern front. He played a prominent part in the Brest negotiations between Soviet Russia and the Austro-German coalition.

Liebknecht, Karl (1871-1919)—an outstanding figure in the German working-class movement, one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany and a leader of the uprising of the Berlin workers in January 1919. After the suppression of the uprising he was brutally murdered by counter-revolutionaries. p. 102

[40] *Putilov workers*—those employed at the Putilov Works in Petrograd. p. 104

[41] Lenin appears to be referring to the period between the launching of the German offensive, on February 18, and the arrival of the Soviet delegation in Brest-Litovsk on February 28, 1918. The German offensive continued until March 3, the day the peace treaty was signed. p. 104

[42] The revolution in Finland which began on January 27, 1918 in response to a call from the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party of Finland, deposed Svinhufvud's bourgeois government and placed power in the hands of the workers. On January 29 a revolutionary government of Finland was set up in the shape of the

Council of People's Representatives, which included E. Gylling, O. W. Kuusinen, Y. Sirola, A. Taimi and others. This government's most important acts were the passing of a law making landless peasants sole owners of the land they tilled, the freeing of the poorest sections of the population of all taxes the expropriation of enterprises belonging to owners who had fled the country, and the setting up of state control over private banks.

The proletarian revolution was victorious, however, only in the south of Finland. The Svinhufvud government made good its losses in the north of the country, where a build-up of counter-revolutionary forces took place, and appealed to the government of Kaiser Germany for aid. On May 2, 1918 German armed forces intervened and the workers' revolution was crushed after a bitter civil was lasting three months. During the White Terror that ensued thousands of revolutionary workers and peasants were executed or tortured to death in prison. p. 105

[43] This refers to the resolution passed by the Moscow Regional Bureau of the R.S.D.L.P. on February 24, 1918. For a criticism of this anti-Party document see Lenin's article "Strange and Monstrous" (see this volume, pp. 68-75). p. 106

[44] Lenin is referring to his conversation with the French officer, the Comte de Lubersac, which took place on February 27, 1918. p. 111

[45] The reference is to the appeal of the People's Commissariat for Military Affairs, which called upon all workers and peasants to take up voluntary military training. Military training had to be made voluntary because the Russian Army under the terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was to be completely demobilised. The appeal was published on March 5, 1918 in the newspaper *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 40. p. 111

[46] *Canossa*—castle in Northern Italy. In 1077, the Roman Emperor Henry IV, who had been defeated by Pope Gregory VII, stood for three days in the robes of repentance before the gates of this castle in order to save himself from excommunication and regain his power as emperor. Hence the phrase "to go to Canossa", i.e., to humiliate oneself before a person whom one has previously resisted. p. 112

[47] According to the terms of the armistice concluded on December 2 (15), 1917 at Brest-Litovsk between the Soviet Government and the powers of the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey), either side could renew hostilities at seven days' notice. The German military command broke this condition by launching an offensive along the whole front on February 18, two days after denouncing the armistice. p. 113

[48] According to Clause VI of the Treaty of Brest, signed on March 3, 1918 Russia undertook to conclude peace with the counter-revo-

lutionary Ukrainian Central Rada. The peace negotiations between the Soviet Government and the Rada did not take place, however. On April 29, 1918 the German occupation forces in collusion with the Constitutional-Democrat and Octobrist bourgeoisie engineered a coup in the Ukraine. The Rada was overthrown and replaced by the dictatorial regime of Hetman Skoropadsky. Negotiations between Soviet Russia and the Skoropadsky government began on May 23 and an armistice was signed on June 14, 1918. p. 114

[49] *Left Socialist-Revolutionaries* (Internationalists) officially became a party at their First All-Russia Congress, held November 19-28 (December 2-11), 1917. They had previously existed as the Left wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, which took shape during the First World War and was led by M. A. Spiridonova, B. D. Kamkov and M. A. Natanson (Bobrov). At the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries had a majority in the Socialist-Revolutionary group, which was split over the question of participation in the Congress. The Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, obedient to the instructions of the Socialist-Revolutionary Central Committee, walked out of the Congress, but the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries stayed on and voted with the Bolsheviks on the main points on the agenda; they rejected, however, the Bolsheviks' offer of posts in the Soviet Government.

After considerable wavering the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, anxious to maintain their influence with the peasants, decided to co-operate with the Bolsheviks and were given posts on the boards of various People's Commissariats. One of the leaders of the party, A. L. Kolegayev, was appointed People's Commissar for Agriculture. Though they co-operated with the Bolsheviks, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries dissented on the basic issues of the construction of socialism and opposed the dictatorship of the proletariat. In January and February 1918 the Central Committee of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party launched a campaign against the conclusion of the Brest Peace Treaty. When the treaty was signed and ratified by the Fourth Congress of Soviets in March 1918, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries withdrew from the Council of People's Commissars but remained on the boards of the People's Commissariats and in local government bodies. As the socialist revolution progressed in the countryside, anti-Soviet feelings emerged among the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. In July 1918 the Left S.R. Central Committee organised the assassination of the German Ambassador in Moscow in the hope of provoking war between Soviet Russia and Germany, and launched an armed revolt against Soviet power. After the suppression of the revolt the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets passed a decision expelling from the Soviets all Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who shared the views of their leadership. p. 114

[50] March 12 was the provisional date for the assembly of the Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets to decide the ques-

tion of ratifying the peace treaty. The Congress was held March 14-16, 1918. p. 114

[51] The resolution on war and peace was passed on March 8 at the morning session of the Party Congress. On Lenin's proposal, which was affirmed by the Congress, the resolution was not made public. It was first published on January 1, 1919 in the workers' daily *Kommunar*, which was issued by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) in Moscow from October 9, 1918 to June 1, 1919.

The last three paragraphs of the resolution were written by G. Y. Sokolnikov and G. Y. Zinoviev. p. 118

[52] During the discussion of Lenin's resolution on war and peace L. D. Trotsky, supported by the "Left Communists", proposed amendments forbidding the Soviet Government from concluding peace with the Ukrainian Central Rada and the Finnish bourgeois government. After Lenin's speech against the attempts by Trotsky and the "Left Communists" to restrict the Central Committee's freedom of manoeuvre, the Congress voted down the amendments. p. 120

[53] K. Radek made a statement on behalf of the group of "Left Communists", in which he tried to continue the polemic over the question of war and peace. p. 122

[54] G. Y. Zinoviev proposed instructing the new Central Committee to find a form for the publication of the resolution on war and peace. Zinoviev's amendment was not accepted; by a majority vote the Congress affirmed Lenin's proposed addition to the resolution. p. 124

[55] The question of revising the Party Programme was put forward by Lenin after the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917. In his "Rough Draft for the Fifth *Letter from Afar*" he defined the basic directions in which the Programme should be changed, and added that "this work must be started at once". Lenin developed the propositions contained in this draft in his April Theses, in his report on the question of revising the Party Programme at the Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) and in other documents (see present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 277-79). For the April Conference Lenin wrote the "Proposed Amendments to the Doctrinal, Political and Other Sections of the Programme", which contained a number of amendments to the R.S.D.L.P. Programme of 1903 (see present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 459-63). The proofs of this draft were handed out to delegates to the April Conference, which gave the Central Committee two months to draw up a draft Party Programme for the Sixth Party Congress.

The Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), which sat from July 26 to August 3 (August 8-16), 1917, endorsed the decision of the April Conference on the need to revise the Programme and instruct-

ed the Central Committee to organise a broad discussion on the problems involved (see *The C.P.S.U. in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Plenums of the Central Committee*, Part 1, Russ. ed., 1954, pp. 387-88). Before the Congress opened, in June 1917 a pamphlet prepared by Lenin on the Central Committee's instructions and called *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme*, was published; it contained all the Programme materials in the possession of the Central Committee. Almost simultaneously the Regional Bureau of the Moscow Industrial Area of the R.S.D.L.P. published "Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme. Collected Articles by V. Milyutin, G. Sokolnikov, A. Lomov and V. Smirnov". A theoretical discussion developed within the Party in the summer and autumn of 1917. A critical analysis of the articles that had appeared in the periodical press and the Moscow collection was given by Lenin in his article "Revision of the Party Programme", published in October 1917, in the magazine *Prosveshcheniye* No. 1-2 (see present edition, Vol. 26, pp. 149-78).

After several discussions on the question of the Party Programme, the Central Committee at a meeting on October 5 (18), 1917 set up under Lenin's chairmanship a commission to revise the Party Programme for the next Party Congress which was due to be held in the autumn of 1917. Eventually, by a decision of the Central Committee of January 24 (February 6), 1918 the drafting of the new Programme was entrusted to a new commission also headed by Lenin. Lenin wrote the "Rough Outline of the Draft Programme", which was handed out to the delegates to the Seventh Congress as material for discussion. The Congress did not, however, discuss the Programme in detail; the drafting of the final version was entrusted to a seven-man commission elected by the Congress. The commission was headed by Lenin. The Congress charged the commission to be guided in its revision of the Programme by the instructions laid down in Lenin's resolution, which had been unanimously adopted by the Congress (see this volume, pp. 140-41). The new, second Party Programme was passed only by the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) in March 1919.

The question of changing the name of the Party had been raised by Lenin as early as 1914, at the beginning of the First World War (see present edition, Vol. 21, p. 93). Lenin showed why this was necessary in his April Theses and in the pamphlet *The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution* (see present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 24 and 84-88) and in a number of other works and speeches in 1917. In the April Theses Lenin wrote: "Instead of 'Social-Democracy', whose official leaders *throughout* the world have betrayed socialism and deserted to the bourgeoisie (the 'defencists' and the vacillating 'Kautskyites'), we must call ourselves the *Communist Party*."

This question was not considered at the April Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) of 1917 or at the Sixth Party Congress. The decision to change the name of the Party was taken only at the Seventh Party Congress, at which Lenin made a report on the subject. p. 126

[56] Lenin is referring to a proposition put forward by Engels in a letter to August Bebel of March 18-28, 1875 (see Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, 1953, p. 357). p. 126

[57] The reference is to the symposia *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme.* Edited and with an Introduction by N. Lenin, Petrograd, Priboi Publishers, 1917 (see present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 455-79) and *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme.* Collected Articles by V. Milyutin, G. Sokolnikov, A. Lomov and V. Smirnov. Published by the Regional Bureau of the Moscow Industrial Area of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), 1917. p. 127

[58] *Prosveshcheniye* (Enlightenment)—a Bolshevik theoretical monthly magazine, set up on Lenin's initiative, started coming out legally in St. Petersburg in December 1911. Its circulation was sometimes as many as 5,000 copies. While in exile abroad, Lenin directed the work of the magazine, edited articles and kept up a regular correspondence with members of the editorial board. The magazine published a number of his works, including *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, *Critical Remarks on the National Question*, and *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination*. On the eve of the First World War, in June 1914, the magazine was banned by the tsarist government. In the autumn of 1917 publication was resumed, but only one, double issue, No. 1-2 (September-October), appeared. It contained Lenin's article "Revision of the Party Programme". p. 127

[59] *Spartak* (Spartacus)—the theoretical magazine of the Moscow Regional Bureau of the Moscow Committee and (as from the second issue) of the Moscow Area Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. It was published in Moscow from May 20 (June 2) to October 29 (November 11), 1917. p. 128

[60] Lenin is giving an account of *Introduction to Borkheim's Pamphlet "In Memory of the German Arch-Patriots of 1806-1807"*, written by Engels on December 15, 1887 (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Band 21, S. 351, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1962). Lenin refers more fully to Engels's propositions in the article "Prophetic Words" (see this volume, pp. 494-99). p. 128

[61] *Chemnitz Congress of the German Social-Democrats*, of September 15-21, 1912, passed a resolution "On Imperialism", in which it described the policy of the imperialist states as a "barefaced policy of robbery and aggression" and called on the working class "to fight with redoubled energy against imperialism until it is overthrown".

Basle Extraordinary International Socialist Congress (November 24-25, 1912) unanimously adopted a manifesto calling on the workers of all countries to wage a resolute fight for peace and to "pit against the might of capitalist imperialism the internation-

al solidarity of the working class". The manifesto recommended that if imperialist war broke out, socialists should use the economic and political crisis it would cause in the struggle for a socialist revolution.

During the world imperialist war of 1914-18 the leaders of the Social-Democratic parties in the countries of Western Europe broke the decisions of the international socialist congresses, descended to positions of social-chauvinism and sided with their imperialist governments. Lenin exposed this betrayal by the leaders of the Second International in his works *The Collapse of the Second International*, and *Socialism and War* (see present edition, Vol. 21, pp. 205-65, 295-338) and elsewhere. p. 132

[62] Lenin has in mind the revolutionary government of Finland—the Council of People's Representatives—set up on January 29, 1918 after the overthrow of Svinhufvud's bourgeois government. In addition to the Council of People's Representatives there was also the Main Council of Workers' Organisations, which was the supreme organ of government. State power was based on the "seims of workers' organisations", which were elected by the organised workers.

Lenin's conclusion that the Soviets were not the only form of the dictatorship of the proletariat was subsequently fully confirmed. After the Second World War a new form of dictatorship of the proletariat arose in a number of countries of Europe and Asia. This was people's democracy, which reflected "the distinctive development of socialist revolution at a time when imperialism had been weakened and the balance of forces had tilted in favour of socialism" (Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Moscow, 1961, p. 20). p. 133

[63] Nationalisation of the land in Soviet Russia was brought about by the Decree on Land of October 26 (November 8), 1917, which announced the expropriation of the landed estates and abolished private ownership of land. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution the Soviet Government gradually nationalised industry and the basic means of production. By the spring of 1918 the largest metallurgical and machine-building works of Petrograd, Moscow and other districts, and the mining industry of the Urals and the Donets Basin had become public property. In May 1918, such important branches of industry as oil and sugar began to be nationalised. At the same time the Soviet Government was preparing to nationalise all large-scale industry, and a decree to this effect was issued on June 28, 1918. p. 136

[64] The decree on the nationalisation of the banks, which was based on Lenin's draft, was endorsed by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on December 14 (27), 1917 and published on December 15 (28) in *Izvestia TsIK* No. 252 (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 1, 1957, pp. 225-30). p. 138

[65] The Decree on Land of October 26 (November 8). 1917 and the Fundamental Law on the Socialisation of the Land of January 18 (31), 1918 envisaged equalitarian distribution of the land ("according to a labour or subsistence standard"), a demand which had been put forward by the peasantry. This was a concession on the part of the Soviet Government to the middle peasant and it was aimed at consolidating the alliance of the working class and the peasantry. At the same time the law on the socialisation of the land proposed "the development of collective farming as the most profitable with regard to economising labour and produce, at the expense of individual farms and with the aim of going over to a socialist economy". p. 138

[66] At the beginning of 1918 the Bureau of International Revolutionary Propaganda of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs started publishing the Decree on Land in foreign languages. In February 1918 the decree was published in Petrograd in English in the book *Decrees Issued by the Revolutionary People's Government*, Vol. 1, Petrograd, February 1918. p. 138

[67] The "last speaker" was the delegate to the Congress for the Petrograd Party organisation Y. G. Fenigstein (Doletsky). On the grounds that the draft programme had not been discussed in the Party organisations, he proposed setting up at the Congress a commission to consider Lenin's draft and to work out a programme for the next Congress. p. 142

[68] This appears to be a reference to a conversation with the leader of the Swedish Left Social-Democratic Party Höglund, who visited Soviet Russia in February 1918. p. 143

[69] In a speech at the Congress Y. Larin proposed including in the name of the Party the word "workers'". His amendment was rejected by the Congress. p. 145

[70] Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow 1958, pp. 43-44. p. 145

[71] The "last speaker" was R. A. Pelshe, who proposed removing from the Party Programme the proposition on using the parliamentary struggle. His amendment was rejected by the Congress. p. 146

[72] Bukharin's proposal, which the Congress rejected, was that the theoretical part of the Programme should include an extensive description of socialism and communism and an indication that the state would wither away in the very near future. His proposition on the withering away of the state was connected with his theoretically incorrect and semi-anarchistic attitude concerning the problem of the state which Lenin had pointed out as early as 1916. Criticising Bukharin's mistaken thesis that the Social-Demo-

crats should stress their fundamental hostility to the state in general, Lenin wrote that Bukharin had "absolutely wrongly" defined the difference between Marxists and anarchists over the question of the state (see present edition, Vol. 35, "To N. Bukharin"). Lenin also criticised Bukharin's theory of the state in his notes on Bukharin's articles on the state and on Bukharin's book *The Economics of the Transitional Period* (see V. I. Lenin, "Notes on the Articles by N. I. Bukharin on the State", Russ. ed., Moscow, 1933, and *Lenin Miscellany XI*, pp. 345-403). Posing the question of the withering away of the state as a short-term aim, soon after the victory of the October Revolution, meant, in effect, weakening the new state based on the dictatorship of the proletariat. p. 147

[73] When the new Central Committee was elected the "Left Communists" refused to serve on it. On behalf of a group of "Left Communists" M. S. Uritsky stated at the Congress that they would not serve on the Central Committee because they did not wish to take responsibility for the policy it was conducting. The "Left Communists" even refused to vote during the election of the Central Committee. The Congress voted its condemnation of this disruptive step and passed a decision that the Party organisations that had delegated the "Left Communists" were to be informed of their conduct. When it met this resistance from the Congress, the group took part in the voting and the Congress rescinded its decision.

The Congress voted in favour of Lenin's resolution condemning the "Left Communists'" refusal to serve on the Central Committee (see this volume, p. 151). In the belief that they would submit to Party discipline, the Congress elected their representatives (N. I. Bukharin, A. Lomov and M. S. Uritsky) to the Central Committee. All three, however, demonstratively stated before the Congress that they refused to serve on the Central Committee. The refusal was not accepted and the Congress decided without a debate to postpone the question of providing deputies in place of the elected "Left Communists" until the Central Committee met.

After the Party Congress and the Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which ratified the peace treaty with Germany, the "Left Communists", in spite of the Central Committee's insistent demands, refused to begin work for several months. For Lenin's appraisal of the disruptive activities of the "Left Communists" after the Seventh Party Congress see "Comment on the Behaviour of the 'Left Communists'" (this volume, p. 202). p. 149

[74] The article "The Chief Task of Our Day" together with Lenin's work "'Left-Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" (see this volume, pp. 323-54) were published in May 1918 as a separate pamphlet under the title *The Chief Task of Our Day*, to which Lenin wrote a short introduction. p. 159

[75] The epigraph is taken from Nikolai Nekrasov's poem "Who Lives Well in Russia". p. 159

[76] *Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets*, which was held to decide the question of the ratification of the Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, was held in Moscow from March 14 to 16, 1918. On March 13 this question was discussed by the Communist group of the Congress; Lenin spoke at the meeting (for the secretarial record of this speech see *Lenin Miscellany XI*, pp. 68-70). By 453 votes to 36 the group approved the signing of the treaty. Not all the delegates had arrived at the time and the group was not present in full strength.

According to the minutes, the Congress was attended by 1,232 delegates with a vote; they included 795 Bolsheviks, 283 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, 25 Socialist-Revolutionaries of the Centre, 21 Mensheviks, and 11 Menshevik-Internationalists. The questions on the agenda were: ratification of the peace treaty; transfer of the capital; election of the All-Russia C.E.C. After a statement on the peace treaty by G. V. Chicherin, People's Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Lenin gave the report on the main question on the agenda on behalf of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee; the second report on behalf of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries against ratification of the treaty was given by B. D. Kamkov.

The Mensheviks, Right and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, Maximalists, anarchists and others put up a solid front against ratification of the treaty. After a keen debate a signed vote was taken and the Congress adopted Lenin's resolution in favour of ratification by an overwhelming majority. There were 784 votes in favour, 261 against and 115 delegates abstained. In connection with the ratification of the Brest Treaty the Left S.R.s withdrew from the Council of People's Commissars. The "Left Communists" refused to take part in the voting and stated in a special declaration that the conclusion of peace would undermine the country's defence and the gains of the revolution. By refusing to vote, the "Left Communists" violated the decisions of the Seventh Party Congress and the Communist group of the Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets and the decision taken by the Central Committee, which met while the Congress was on, that there should be no action against the decisions of the Party.

The Congress passed a resolution on the transfer of the capital of the Soviet state to Moscow and elected a Central Executive Committee consisting of 200 members.

The decision of the Congress on ratification of the peace treaty was approved by the local Soviets, the Party organisations and the working people at numerous meetings and conferences held at the time. p. 169

[77] The draft resolution was written by Lenin in reply to a message from Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, in which he tried, by expressing sympathy he probably did not feel for the Russian people over the German occupation of the Baltic States, Byelorussia and the Ukraine, to influence the decision of the Con-

gress and prevent Soviet Russia from ratifying the peace treaty with Germany.

The draft resolution was read out by Y. M. Sverdlov and approved by the Congress. p. 171

[78] The reference is to the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties, which were represented in the Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, however, soon took the path of direct counter-revolution and on June 14, 1918 the All-Russia C.E.C. passed a decision expelling the counter-revolutionary Socialist-Revolutionaries (the Rights and the Centre) and the Mensheviks from the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the local Soviets. The decision was published on June 18 in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 123. p. 172

[79] Lenin appears to connect the new turn in the development of the revolution with February 10, when Germany broke off peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk. The German action was facilitated by L. D. Trotsky's refusal to conclude peace on the terms proposed by the German imperialists. Lenin also mentions this date in the plan he made for his report to the Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets on ratification of the Brest Treaty. In another document, the plan for his speech at a meeting of the Communist group of the Congress of Soviets, Lenin defines the turning point in the development of the revolution as February 17. The German offensive along the whole front began on February 18, 1918. p. 173

[80] Lenin has in mind the speech at the meeting of the Petrograd Soviet on September 21 (October 4), 1917 by Dubasov, an army officer who had returned from the front. Describing the mood of the soldiers, Dubasov stated that they wanted only one thing, an end to the war, and that they would not go on fighting. p. 183

[81] The reference is to the Treaty between the Russian and Finnish Socialist Republics, the first treaty in history between socialist countries. In the middle of February 1918, the revolutionary government of the Finnish republic proposed a treaty of friendship to the Soviet Government. The Russia-Finland Co-ordinative Commission was formed to draw up the treaty and its draft was discussed at several meetings of the Council of People's Commissars, Lenin making several amendments to it. The treaty was signed on March 1 by a special commission headed by Lenin. It was endorsed by the Council of People's Commissars and published on March 10, 1918 in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 45 (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 1, 1957, pp. 503-10). Based on recognition of the state sovereignty of Finland, the treaty provided evidence of the Soviet Government's consistent adherence to the principle of the right of nations to self-determination. p. 185

[82] Lenin is referring to the second report, by B. D. Kamkov, on the question of ratification of the peace treaty. p. 191

[83] In his speech at the Congress the Menshevik L. Martov claimed that the contents of the treaty were not known to the Congress delegates and compared them to peasants at a volost gathering, forced by the local authorities to sign papers without knowing what was in them. p. 191

[84] Lenin is referring to the appeal of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies "To the Peoples of the Whole World", which was published in the leading newspapers on March 15 (28), 1917. For an appraisal of this half-hearted Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary appeal see Lenin's speech on war, delivered June 9 (22), 1917 at the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets (present edition, Vol. 25, pp. 29-42). p. 194

[85] The Appeal to the Soldiers of All the Belligerent Countries was the first appeal written by Lenin on behalf of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, the St. Petersburg Committee and the editorial board of *Pravda* (see present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 186-88). p. 194

[86] When the resolution on ratification of the Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was put to the vote at the Communist group of the Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets on March 13, 1918, 453 votes were cast in favour of ratification and 36 against. p. 199

[87] *Original Version of the Article* "*The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*" was dictated by Lenin to a shorthand typist on March 23-28, 1918. p. 203

[88] This refers to the discussion on the role of the trade unions at the First All-Russia Congress of Trade Unions held in Petrograd, January 7-14 (20-27), 1918. p. 215

[89] The first draft of the Decree on Revolutionary Tribunals was submitted by the People's Commissariat for Justice on March 30, 1918 for approval by the Council of People's Commissars. When it was discussed by the Council a decision (document "B") proposed by Lenin, stating that it should be radically revised, was accepted. The draft was revised on the basis of Lenin's instructions, approved at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars on May 4, 1918 and published on May 17, 1918. p. 219

[90] *Kommunist*—a magazine organised by Lenin. It was published in Geneva by the editors of the newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat* in 1915. Only one issue (a double issue) appeared. It contained three articles by Lenin: "The Collapse of the Second International", "The Voice of an Honest French Socialist", and "Imperialism and Socialism in Italy" (see present edition, Vol. 21, pp. 205-59, 349-56, 357-66).

Lenin had planned to make *Kommunist* an international organ of the Left Social-Democrats. But the editors of *Sotsial-Demokrat*

soon became involved in serious disagreements with Bukharin, Pyatakov and Bosch, which grew worse after the magazine appeared. In view of this group's anti-Party conduct the editors of *Sotsial-Demokrat*, on Lenin's suggestion, announced that they considered it impossible to continue publishing the magazine. p. 221

[91] *Lieberdans*—ironic nickname for the Menshevik leaders, Lieber and Dan, and their supporters. It caught on after a satirical article by Demyan Bedny called "The Lieberdan" had appeared in the Moscow Bolshevik newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat* No. 141, August 25 (September 7), 1917. p. 221

[92] *Theses on Banking Policy* were approved at one of the meetings between Lenin and bank employees that took place in March and April 1918. The theses were drawn up by Lenin in the form of minutes, with notes on the results of the voting on the various points and any special opinions expressed by those taking part. p. 222

[93] The Decree on the nationalisation of the banks was passed on December 14 (27), 1917 by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. p. 222

[94] The meeting in the Alexeyevsky Riding School in Moscow, attended by 8,000 people, was in protest against the shooting down by the Menshevik government of Georgia of a workers' meeting held in Tiflis on February 23, 1918, the day of the convocation of the Transcaucasian Seim. After speeches by V. I. Lenin, N. V. Krylenko, N. I. Podvoisky and others, a resolution was passed unanimously stating: "We, workers, ... brand with scorn the criminal and treacherous tactics of the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, who deal brutally with the Caucasian workers and peasants and associate themselves with the bourgeoisie in welcoming the invasion of foreign plunderers. We declare that the working class has nothing in common with these traitors and will reply to any attempt at seizing the power of the workers and peasants by *ruthless* suppression of the capitalist counter-revolutionaries and their agents." (*Pravda* No. 67, April 9, 1918.)

Lenin's speech did not appear in the leading newspapers. In *Pravda* No. 67, April 9, 1918 a short notice appeared stating: "Comrade Lenin made a long and vivid speech. He was greeted with loud applause." p. 224

[95] Imperialist Japan had just begun its occupation of the Far East, On December 30, 1917 (January 12, 1918) a Japanese warship and merchant ship entered the Port of Vladivostok without informing the local Soviet authorities. The same day the Japanese Consul General in Vladivostok sent the city authorities a Note stating on behalf of the Japanese Government that Japanese warships had been dispatched to the port "for the purpose of protecting our nationals".

On March 29, 1918 the Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary municipal council fell in with the wishes of the Japanese military by declaring itself unable to maintain order in Vladivostok. On April 4, two Japanese were murdered in a planned and organised act of provocation. With this as a pretext, Japanese troops assisted by Russian whiteguards made their first landing and occupied Vladivostok on April 5. The occupation of the city marked the beginning of the open intervention of the countries of the Entente in the Far East.

When news of the Japanese intervention was received, Lenin sent the Vladivostok Soviet specific instructions on how to fight the occupying forces (see this volume, p. 226). p. 225

[96] *Shahumyan, S. G.* (1878-1918)—Temporary Commissar Extraordinary for Caucasian Affairs and Chairman of the Baku Soviet—was constantly persecuted by the Transcaucasian counter-revolutionary Menshevik government. In February 1918 it became known that the Mensheviks intended to murder him. This is what Lenin is referring to when he speaks of a gallows being erected for Comrade Shahumyan. The plot was not carried out at the time simply because Shahumyan successfully evaded capture by the Transcaucasian Menshevik government.

In August 1918 Shahumyan and other leading Party workers in Baku were arrested by the British intervention forces with the assistance of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. He was one of the 26 Baku commissars who were shot. p. 225

[97] Immediately after the Japanese landing in Vladivostok a plenary meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Siberia (Tsentrosibir) passed a resolution protesting against the illegal action taken by the Japanese Government; military law was declared throughout Siberia and all local Soviets undertook to redouble their efforts to organise a Red Army. On April 5 Lenin sent a telegram to Tsentrosibir approving this decision and particularly stressed that "no assurances can now be believed and the only serious guarantee is substantial military preparation on our part" (*Lenin Miscellany XXXIV*, p. 22). In some localities, however, hopes were entertained of settling the conflict with the aid of commissions from the Entente countries. Lenin sent the telegram published here to discourage these illusions. p. 226

[98] In April 1918 it was reported in the press that General Kornilov had been killed by his own soldiers. Later it was established that Kornilov had been killed by an artillery shell on April 13, 1918 during an action against units of the Red Army near Ekaterinodar (now Krasnodar). p. 230

[99] In the manuscript, Lenin's work *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government* was headed "Theses on the Tasks of the Soviet Government in the Present Situation". Lenin's theses were discussed at a meeting of the Party Central Committee on April 26, 1918.

The Central Committee unanimously approved them and passed a decision to have them published as an article in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, and also as a separate pamphlet. In 1918 the pamphlet went through more than ten editions, in Moscow, Petrograd, Saratov, Kazan, Tambov and other cities of Russia. It was published in the same year in English in New York, and in French in Geneva; an abridged version in German, edited by F. Platten, appeared in Zurich under the title *Am Tage nach der Revolution*.

The Central Committee instructed Lenin to give a report on the immediate tasks of the Soviet government at a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. and to formulate the Theses briefly as a resolution (see this volume, pp. 314-17). p. 235

[100] *Bogayevsky, M. P.* (1881-1918)—counter-revolutionary leader and organiser of the civil war against Soviet power on the Don. He was defeated and surrendered in the spring of 1918. p. 242

[101] On November 18 (December 1), 1917 the Council of People's Commissars, acting on a proposal made by Lenin, passed a decision "On the Remuneration of People's Commissars and Senior Government Employees and Officials" (published on November 23 [December 6], 1917 in No. 16 of the *Newspaper of the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government*). Drafted by Lenin it fixed the maximum monthly salary of a People's Commissar at 500 rubles with an additional 100 rubles for every member of his family unable to work. This corresponded roughly to the worker's average monthly wage. On January 2 (15), 1918, in answer to an inquiry from the People's Commissar for Labour A. G. Shlyapnikov, the Council of People's Commissars issued a decision written by Lenin explaining that the Decree of November 18 (December 1), 1917 fixed no limit for the payment of experts, and thus sanctioned higher remuneration for scientific and technical experts. p. 249

[102] Control over foreign trade was initiated in the early days of Soviet power. At first this was handled by the Petrograd Revolutionary Military Committee, which considered applications for the import and export of goods and supervised the work of the customs. By a decree of the Council of People's Commissars of December 29, 1917 (January 11, 1918) foreign trade was placed under the control of the People's Commissariat for Trade and Industry. This kind of control and customs inspection, however, was not enough to protect the Soviet economy from foreign capital. Lenin emphasised later that the working class of Soviet Russia "would be totally unable to build up its own industry and make Russia an industrial country without the protection, not of tariffs, but of the monopoly of foreign trade" (see V. I. Lenin, *On the Foreign Policy of the Soviet State*, Moscow, p. 424). In December 1917 Lenin proposed introducing a state monopoly on foreign trade, a decree on which was passed by the Council of People's Commissars on April 22, 1918 (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 2, 1959, pp. 158-60). p. 252

[103] In the first months of Soviet power indemnities and special taxes were one of the principal sources of revenue, particularly in the provinces. When Soviet power became more firmly established, the question arose of how to devise a regular system of taxation based primarily on a progressive income tax and a property tax, which would make it possible to place the main burden of taxation on the well-to-do sections of the population. At the First All-Russia Congress of Representatives of the Financial Departments of the Soviets, Lenin pointed out: "We have many plans in this sphere and have cleared the ground on which to build the foundation, but the actual foundation of that building has not yet been built. The time for this has now come" (see this volume, pp. 384-85). The Congress accepted Lenin's proposal on the need to introduce an income tax and property tax and elected a special commission to draw up the requisite Statute on the basis of Lenin's theses.

On June 17,1918 the Council of People's Commissars approved the Decree on the Amendment of the Decree of November 24, 1917 on the Levying of Direct Taxes, which laid down a strict system of income and property taxation (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 2, 1959, pp. 441-43). p. 253

[104] *Decree on Consumers' Co-operative Societies* was passed by the Council of People's Commissars on April 10, 1918, approved at a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. on April 11, and published over Lenin's signature in *Pravda* No. 71 of April 13 and *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 75 of April 16.

The first draft of the decree, written by Lenin, was worked out in detail by the People's Commissariat for Food and published on January 19 (February 1) in *Izvestia TsIK* No. 14. The draft decree was bitterly opposed by bourgeois co-operators, who insisted that co-operative societies should be independent of the organs of Soviet power. In order to use the existing co-operative apparatus for accounting and control of the distribution of foodstuffs the Council of People's Commissars made several concessions during its negotiations with bourgeois co-operators (March to the beginning of April 1918). On April 9 and 10 the C.P.C. discussed the draft decree proposed by the co-operators. Lenin revised the draft considerably (he rewrote points 11, 12 and 13), and the decree with his amendments was passed by the Council of People's Commissars, and then by the All-Russia C.E.C. p. 255

[105] The organisation of social production on socialist principles made it necessary to draw up new internal regulations for the nationalised enterprises, and new regulations on labour discipline and on enrolling all able-bodied persons for socially useful work. These questions acquired special importance in the period of the peaceful breathing-space in the spring of 1918.

The first regulations concerning labour discipline were worked out by the Soviet trade unions in conjunction with managerial

bodies. They were discussed at a number of meetings of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council with representatives of the central organs of the trade unions taking part. On March 27 the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council after a debate in which Lenin participated passed a decision charging the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions with the task of drawing up a general statute on labour discipline. On April 1, with Lenin taking part, the Presidium examined the draft resolution on labour discipline drawn up by the A.C.C.T.U. and proposed that it should be re-worded as a decree, taking into account Lenin's remarks and suggestions. The re-worded Statute on Labour Discipline passed by the A.C.C.T.U. on April 3 was published in the magazine *Narodnoye Khozyaistvo* No. 2, for April 1918. In this statute the A.C.C.T.U. stated that strict regulations regarding internal management should be introduced at all state-owned enterprises, that output quotas and account of labour productivity should be established, that piece-work and a system of bonuses for exceeding output quotas should be introduced, and that stern action should be taken against those who violated labour discipline. On the basis of the Statute specific internal regulations were drawn up at factories and these played an important part in the organisation of socialist industry.

The Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union was one of the first to carry out Lenin's instructions on raising labour productivity by introducing a system of piece-work and bonuses. When the question of improving labour discipline was discussed by the A.C.C.T.U. representatives of the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union got the thesis on the need for piece rates included in the resolution submitted on April 1 for consideration by the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council. In April, on the basis of the decisions taken by the A.C.C.T.U. the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union instructed all the lower organisations of the union to adopt piece-work and the bonus system in the metal industry. p. 258

[106] After the October Revolution piece-work was almost everywhere superseded by a time system of payment, which had an adverse effect on labour productivity and labour discipline.

The introduction of piece-work, which came closest to the socialist principle of "to each according to his work", began at the first nationalised enterprises. During the period of respite, piece-work was widely adopted in industry. By July 1918, for instance, a quarter of the workers of Petrograd went over to piece-work. The principle of payment according to the piece was finally endorsed by the publication in December 1918 of the Soviet Labour Code. p. 258

[107] This refers to the right protected by bourgeois law to keep secret all production, trade and financial operations and also all the relevant documents at private capitalist enterprises.

In his work *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It* Lenin showed that commercial secrecy in the hands of the bourgeoisie was "an instrument for concealing financial swindles and the fantastically high profits of big capital" (see present edition, Vol. 25, p. 343), and showed why commercial secrecy should be abolished. The resolution of the Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) "On the Economic Situation" demanded the abolition of commercial secrecy as an essential measure for making workers' control effective (see *The C.P.S.U. in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Plenums of the Central Committee*, Part 1, Russ. ed., 1954, p. 378). After the October Revolution commercial secrecy was abolished by the Statute on Workers' Control passed by the All-Russia C.E.C. and the Council of People's Commissars on November 14 (27), 1917. p. 260

[108] The reference is to the decree of the Council of People's Commissars "On Centralisation of Management, Protection of Roads and the Improvement of Their Carrying Capacity" (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Vol. 2 Russ. ed., 1959, pp. 18-20). Having considered on March 18, 1918 the draft decree proposed by the People's Commissariat for Ways of Communication on non-interference by various institutions in the affairs of the Railway Department, the Council of People's Commissars instructed a special commission to revise the decree on the basis of the following theses put forward by Lenin: (1) Considerable centralisation. (2) Appointment of responsible executives at every local centre as elected by the railway organisations. (3) Unquestioning obedience to their orders. (4) Dictatorial rights to be given to the military detachments for maintaining order. (5) Steps to be taken immediately to take account of rolling stock and its whereabouts. (6) Steps to be taken to set up a technical department. (7) Fuel.

Lenin made several important amendments to the draft, which was submitted by the commission and considered at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars on March 21, before being approved by the government. In view of the hostility with which the decree was greeted by the All-Russia Executive Committee of Railwaymen (Vikzhedor), which was strongly influenced by the Mensheviks and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, the People's Commissariat for Ways of Communication on March 23 proposed amending the decree at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars. The representatives of Vikzhedor who attended the meeting attacked the decree on the grounds that it meant the "destruction of the role of Vikzhedor and its replacement by the individual authority of a Commissar". Arguing against the opponents of the decree, Lenin explained the need for taking the very firmest measures to eliminate sabotage and inefficiency on the railways and introduced amendments making the decree even more categorical. With these amendments the decree was finally approved by the government on March 23 and published over Lenin's signature on March 26 in No. 57 of *Izvestia VTsIK*. p. 267

[109] *Vperyod* (Forward)—a Menshevik daily newspaper, which began to appear in March 1917 in Moscow as the organ of the Moscow organisation of Mensheviks, and subsequently as the organ of the committees of the R.S.D.L.P. (Mensheviks) of the Moscow organisation and the Central Region On April 2, 1918 the newspaper became the organ of the Mensheviks' Central Committee as well, and L. Martov, F. I. Dan and A. S. Martynov joined its editorial board, It was banned for its counter-revolutionary activities in February 1919 by decision of the All-Russia C.E.C. p. 269

[110] *Nash Vek* (Our Age)—one of the names of the newspaper Rech, the central organ of the counter-revolutionary party of the Constitutional-Democrats. After it had been banned by a decision of the Petrograd Revolutionary Military Committee of October 26 (November 8), 1917, the newspaper continued to appear until August 1918 under various names: *Nasha Rech* (Our Speech), *Svobodnaya Rech* (Free Speech), *Vek* (Age), *Novaya Rech* (New Speech) and *Nash Vek*. p. 269

[111] Lenin is referring to and quoting from *Anti-Dühring* by F. Engels, Section Three. Socialism. Chapter II. Theoretical. p. 273

[112] Chernyshevsky describes Turgenev's attitude to Dobrolyubov and himself in an account of a conversation he had with Turgenev in the early sixties of the last century (see the article "An Expression of Gratitude" in *Complete Collected Works* by N. G. Chernyshevsky, Vol. 10, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1951, pp. 122-23). p. 274

[113] The politically active workers of Moscow and many Party and Soviet workers were invited to a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. on April 29, 1918.

N. K. Krupskaya wrote of Lenin's speech at this meeting, "To enable the workers' active of Moscow to hear Ilyich's report on the immediate tasks of the Soviet government, the meeting was held at the Polytechnical Museum. Ilyich was greeted with a tumultuous ovation and listened to with rapt attention. Obviously, the question was one of keen interest to everybody. Ilyich spoke there with extraordinary fervour" (see N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 462). p. 279

[114] The reference is to the Second Congress of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party, which was held from April 17 to 25, 1918 in Moscow. Two trends emerged during the discussion of the party's tasks in the current situation. One section of the delegates led by B. D. Kamkov defended the activities of the Central Committee directed against the conclusion of the Brest peace and approved the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries' refusal to work in the central organs of the Soviet Government because the treaty had been ratified by the Extraordinary Fourth Congress of Soviets. Another section, led by M. A. Spiridonova, criticised the Central Committee, accused it of extreme "Leftism" and insisted that the Left

Socialist-Revolutionaries should participate in the Soviet Government in order to get their agrarian programme adopted. After a heated debate the Congress passed an ambivalent decision. While approving the position of the Central Committee on the question of the Brest peace and the withdrawal of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries from the Council of People's Commissars, it advocated participation in the central and local administrative bodies with the aim of "straightening out the general line of Soviet policy". p. 283

[115] *Znamya Truda* (Banner of Labour)—daily newspaper of the Petrograd Committee of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. It first appeared on August 23 (September 5), 1917. After the First All-Russia Congress of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party, as from No. 105, which appeared on December 28, 1917 (January 10, 1918), the newspaper became the central organ of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party. It was banned in July 1918 during the Left Socialist-Revolutionary revolt. p. 286

[116] This refers to the third point in the theses passed at the proposal of the Menshevik I. A. Isuv by the plenum of the Moscow Regional Committee of Social-Democrats (Mensheviks), held in April 1918. In his article "'Left-Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" Lenin compared this thesis (a "perfect example of bourgeois provocatory speech-making") with the economic propositions put forward by the "Left Communists", showing that they were the same and that the position the "Left Communists" had taken up meant their complete renunciation of communism in practice and complete desertion to the camp of the petty bourgeoisie" (see this volume, p. 348). p. 286

[117] *Theses on the Present Situation* put forward by the "Left Communists" were discussed at a joint meeting of members of the Party Central Committee and the "Left Communist" group on April 4, 1918. Lenin examined and criticised these theses in detail in his article "'Left-Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" (see this volume, pp. 323-54). p. 288

[118] The reference is to the voting on the ratification of the peace treaty at the Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B). Distorting the facts, the "Left Communists" quoted the number who voted for the peace treaty according to the results of the preliminary voting on the two resolutions—Lenin's and that of the "Left Communists" (the former, Lenin's resolution, gained 28 votes, the latter only 9, and was immediately turned down). But when speaking of how many votes were cast against conclusion of the peace treaty the "Left Communists" quoted the results of the final voting on Lenin's resolution alone (30 votes in favour, 12 against, and 4 abstentions). p. 288

[119] *The Second All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets* was held in Ekaterinoslav (now Dniepropetrovsk) March 17-19, 1918. The Congress

was attended by 964 delegates: 428 Bolsheviks, 414 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, 82 non-Party, and 40 other delegates. The Bolsheviks had to fight not only the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the bourgeois nationalists but also the "Left Communists", who tried to use the Congress to promote their adventuristic policy and put forward a disruptive motion of censure against the Soviet Government's conclusion of the Brest Treaty. The Bolshevik group, however led by Y. B. Gamarnik, A. V. Ivanov, F. A. Sergeyev (Artyom) and N. A. Skrypnik, staunchly defended Lenin's position over the matter of peace and got the Congress to approve the decision of the Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets on the ratification of the peace treaty with Germany.

In its Resolution on the Political Situation, which expressed the will of the Ukrainian people, the Congress stated that the mass of the working people of the Ukraine together with the workers and peasants of Russia and the other republics would fight resolutely for Soviet power. In view of the situation that had arisen in connection with the Brest peace, the Congress declared the Ukraine an independent Soviet republic and called on the working people of the Ukraine to wage a ruthless struggle against the Austro-German invaders and the Central Rada. At the same time the Congress stressed that the terms of the peace treaty insisted on by imperialist Germany were unjust, that the Ukraine's federative connection with Russia was only formally broken, and that essentially her relations with the R.S.F.S.R. remained unchanged. p. 288

[120] Lenin is referring to the state-capitalist combines set up in the leather, textile and sugar industries. At the beginning of 1918 the Tanners' Union came to an agreement with the All-Russia Society of Manufacturers and Factory-owners of the Leather Industry, under which the tanneries were to work on a subsidised basis for the Soviet Government and place all their output at the disposal of the state. The industry was administered by the Central Leather Board (Glavkozha), on which two-thirds of the seats were held by workers and one-third by private manufacturers and bourgeois technical experts. Analogous agreements were concluded in textiles, sugar and some other branches of the light and food industries. The state retained the right to confiscate any enterprises that were part of a state-capitalist combine.

Lenin approved the "proletariat's attempts to make contracts with the manufacturers' associations" under conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and stated that agreements of this kind could ensure the workers' control over whole branches of industry". p. 297

[121] *Levi Kommunist* (Left Communist) was how Lenin ironically dubbed the magazine *Kommunist*, the mouthpiece of the anti-Party group of "Left Communists". p. 299

[122] Lenin is referring to the issue of money and banknotes by the Soviet Government to make good its insufficient revenues from the usual sources (industry, transport, regular taxes and so on). Thanks to Party and Government measures to improve the country's financial position, this emission was reduced in the middle of 1918. p. 302

[123] The reference is to Lenin's book *The State and Revolution*, which was reviewed on April 20, 1918 in the "Left Communist" magazine *Kommunist* No. 1. p. 302

[124] *The Left Zimmerwald*—a group of Left Internationalists founded on Lenin's initiative at the International Socialist Conference in Zimmerwald, September 1915. p. 306

[125] Speaking on Lenin's report at a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C., the anarchist A. Y. Ghe stated that "hope of assistance from the German proletariat is a utopia". According to Ghe, the German proletariat, like the whole West-European proletariat was "unclean" and "hypnotised by its depraving orthodox Social-Democratic education". p. 307

[126] Karl Marx spoke of the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism under certain specific conditions in a speech at a meeting in Amsterdam on September 8, 1872 (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Band 18, S. 160, Dietz Verlag, Berlin). Marx regarded purchasing the means of production from the capitalists as one of the specific ways of bringing about such a transition. Engels wrote: "We are certainly not of the opinion that buying up is inadmissible under any circumstances; Marx has stated his opinion to me—and how often!—that the cheapest thing for us would be if we could buy off the whole gang of them" (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Band 22, S. 504). p. 310

[127] *Six Theses on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government* were written by Lenin on instructions of the All-Russia C.E.C. after his report on the immediate tasks of the Soviet government had been discussed at a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. on April 29, 1918. Lenin's theses were unanimously approved by the Party Central Committee on May 3, and on May 4 the Presidium of the All-Russia C.E.C. sent them out to the local Soviets with a circular letter stating that Lenin's theses "should form the basis of the work of all Soviets". p. 314

[128] The reason for this demand was that when certain enterprises were nationalised the staffs of these enterprises and certain trade unions had a tendency to regard the enterprise or branch of industry as belonging to the staff of the enterprise or to the trade union. Lenin was very much against such anarcho-syndicalist-tendencies. When the question of water transport on the Volga was being discussed by the Council of People's Commissars on March 4, 1918,

Lenin condemned the proposal to make the nationalised river craft the property of the trade unions of the various shipping lines and stressed that such aspirations had nothing in common with socialism. "The task of socialism," Lenin said, "is to make all the means of production the property of the whole people, and certainly not to have the ships handed over to the ship workers and the banks handed over to the bank workers." p. 319

[129] *The Draft Plan of Scientific and Technical Work* marked an important stage in the process of mobilising Russia's scientific personnel to deal with the, problems of the national economy.

Negotiations with the Academy of Sciences were initiated by Lenin and the Soviet Government in January 1918. Lenin directed the work of the People's Commissariat for Education, which was conducting the negotiations. At the end of March the Academy of Sciences in a declaration to the Soviet Government consented to the government's proposal that the Academy should work, in the field of exploring the country's natural resources. On April 12, at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars with Lenin in the chair a resolution was passed that set the Academy of Sciences "the urgent task of systematically solving the problems of the correct distribution of the country's industry and the most rational utilisation of economic resources". A decision was also taken recognising the need to finance the work of the Academy in this field. With considerable financial backing from the government the Academy's Commission for the Study of Russia's Natural Productive Forces enlarged the scope of its activities.

In the Draft Plan of Scientific and Technical Work Lenin outlined a broad programme for the work of the Academy of Sciences and all the country's scientific and technical personnel, Lenin's pointers were later amplified in a number of documents drawn up by the Supreme Economic Council (SEC). One of these was the model programme of work of the expert commissions of the Academy of Sciences compiled on April 25 by the Supreme Economic Council Department for the Organisation of Production. Guided by Lenin's instructions, the Soviet economic departments in the capital and the provinces, the Academy of Sciences and various research institutes and societies studied the country's natural wealth, power resources and various problems connected with the electrification of the national economy. Committees and bureaus for the electrification of the basic industrial areas were set up in Petrograd and Moscow in the first months of Soviet rule. In the autumn of 1918, the Central Electrotechnical Council was formed on a mandate from Lenin, which set out its main task as "producing the best and most rapid solution of the technical and estimating problems in the field of the new power developments". Electrification on a large scale for those days was launched in 1918. p. 320

[130] Lenin is referring to the materials provided by the Commission for the Study of Russia's Natural Productive Forces, set up by the

Academy of Sciences in 1915. On Lenin's instructions the commission was given much wider scope for publishing its findings. A series of books called "Russia's Riches" and the multi-volume *The Natural Productive Forces of Russia* began to appear. In the first three years of Soviet power (1918-20) the commission published four times as many books as in the three years preceding the revolution. p. 320

[131] On May 2, 1918 the Moscow Revolutionary Tribunal passed a light sentence against four judges serving on the Moscow Commission of Investigation who had been charged with blackmail and taking bribes. Lenin first sent his letter on the subject to N. V. Krylenko, a member of the Board of the People's Commissariat for Justice, with a request that the Party Central Committee should be informed of the names of the guilty judges. When he received the reply, which was written on the other side of the letter, Lenin sent it to the Central Committee, drawing their attention to the facts furnished by Krylenko. On Lenin's insistence the All-Russia C.E.C. reconsidered the case and three of the accused had their sentences increased to ten years' imprisonment.

Simultaneously with his letter to the Central Committee Lenin sent the People's Commissar for Justice D. I. Kursky a note demanding that "a law must be introduced *at once*, with demonstrative haste, stating that the punishment for bribery (extortion, subornation, arranging of bribes and *so on*) is to be *not less* than ten years' imprisonment with an additional ten years' compulsory labour" (see present edition, Vol. 35, "Letter to D. I. Kursky"). On Lenin's initiative the Council of People's Commissars passed a decision on May 4, 1918 instructing the People's Commissariat for Justice to draw up a decree that stipulated a heavy minimum sentence for bribery and any connivance in bribery. The Draft Decree on Bribery was submitted by the People's Commissariat for Justice for consideration at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars on May 8. Lenin introduced an amendment, after which the decree was passed (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 2, 1959, pp. 236-37 and 240-42). p. 322

[132] *Nozdryov*—a character in Gogol's *Dead Souls* personifying the bullying type of landowner. p. 330

[133] Lenin is quoting statements by Karl Marx set forth by Engels in *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* (see Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, p. 438). p. 342

[134] Lenin has in mind one of the basic arguments used by the Mensheviks against the October Socialist Revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Mensheviks maintained that the seizure of power was "premature", that Russia had not yet achieved a high enough development of the productive forces for socialism to be feasible. After the October Revolution they continued to oppose Soviet power and revolutionary socialist reforms.

These Menshevik views were summed up in a book by N. Sukhanov, *Notes on the Revolution*, which Lenin criticised in his article "Our Revolution (Appropos the Notes of N. Sukhanov)". Refuting the Menshevik idea that the socialist revolution in Russia was "premature" because of economic and cultural backwardness, Lenin wrote that the working class of Russia must begin with the winning of state power by revolutionary means "and *then*, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations" (*Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 822). p. 345

[135] *The Man in a Muffler*—a character from the story of that title by Anton Chekhov. Typifies the narrow-minded Philistine. afraid of all innovation and initiative. p. 345

[136] In June 1917 the Bolshevik Central Committee was planning a peaceful demonstration by the workers and soldiers of Petrograd. At a joint meeting of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and members of the Presidium of the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets held to discuss the matter on June 11 (24), 1917, the Menshevik I. G. Tsereteli made a viciously slanderous statement against the Bolsheviks, accusing them of plotting against the government and aiding the counter-revolution, and threatened to take resolute steps to disarm the workers who supported the Bolsheviks. p. 347

[137] Lenin is quoting V. L. Pushkin's epigram about a mediocre poet who sent his verses to Phoebus, god of the sun and patron of the arts. The epigram ends with the following lines:

And while he read, the yawning Phoebus asked
What age this rhymster had attained,
How long such rumbling odes composed?
"*He is fifteen*," *Erato made reply.*
"*But fifteen years?*" "*No more, my lord.*"
"*Then shall the birch be his reward!*" p. 350

[138] The international situation was discussed by the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party in connection with the crisis caused by Germany, which was demanding the cession to Finland of Fort Ino (a fortification on the Russian frontier with Finland, which with Kronstadt formed an essential part of the Petrograd defence system), and also in connection with the continued British occupation of Murmansk in spite of the protests of the Soviet Government, and the occupying forces' preparations to penetrate into the hinterland. Lenin examined both these questions in detail at a joint meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. and the Moscow Soviet on May 14, 1918 (see this volume, pp. 379-80). p. 355

[139] Lenin's proposals were endorsed at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars on May 8, 1918, during the discussion on the report of the People's Commissar for Food A. D. Tsyurupa

and on the decree granting the Commissar emergency powers. The document is an instruction to the commission set up by the Council of People's Commissars to revise the draft decree submitted by the People's Commissariat for Food granting the Commissar emergency powers.

Based on Lenin's propositions, the decree was approved on May 9, 1918 by the Council of People's Commissars, and on May 13, by the All-Russia C.E.C. It was published on May 14 in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 94 (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 2, 1959, pp. 261-66). p. 356

[140] *Protest to the German Government against the occupation of the Crimea* was written by Lenin in the spring of 1918, when the German imperialist forces occupied the Ukraine and, in violation of the Brest Treaty, marched into the Crimea as far as Sevastopol, where the Black Sea fleet was stationed. On the instructions of the Soviet Government some of the ships were moved on April 29-30 to a new base at Novorossiisk. Only the ships that refused to obey the instruction to move and those that could not be moved for technical reasons remained in Sevastopol. On May 11 the German Command sent an ultimatum demanding the return of the fleet to Sevastopol on the grounds that the withdrawal of the Black Sea fleet from Sevastopol was an infringement of the Brest Treaty, and threatening to continue its offensive along the Black Sea coast.

Lenin's protest formed the basis of the Note sent by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs on May 13, 1918. p. 358

[141] This refers to the German Government's radio-telegram of March 30, 1918, which declared that the Ukraine consisted of nine gubernias, including Taurida Gubernia but not the Crimea. The German occupation of the Crimea was therefore in contradiction to the official declaration of the German Government. p. 358

[142] *Theses on the Present Political Situation* were drafted by Lenin on May 10, 1918 and discussed on the same day at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). The final, edited version of the theses was approved by the Central Committee on May 13, all members of the Central Committee who attended the meeting voted in favour, except G. Y. Sokolnikov and J. V. Stalin. Later, the majority of members of the Central Committee living in Petrograd gave their support to the theses. The Central Committee entrusted Lenin with the task of making the reports to the Moscow City Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) and the Joint Meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. and the Moscow Soviet, and of moving these theses as a resolution. The same day Lenin delivered a report based on the theses at the Moscow City Party Conference, which voted its approval. p. 360

[143] Lenin's report evoked bitter attacks from the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who tried to use the critical international and internal situation as a weapon against the Bolshevik

Party and the Soviet government. Because Lenin had to leave the conference on urgent business the reply to the debate, by agreement with Lenin, was given by Y. M. Sverdlov, who made a resolute stand against the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary attacks. The meeting rejected the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary resolutions, demanding the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, denunciation of the Brest Treaty, and conclusion of an alliance with the Allied powers for continuation of the war against Germany. The Bolshevik resolution, written by Sverdlov, approving the policy of the Soviet Government, was carried by a majority.

The plan of Lenin's report on foreign policy at the Joint Meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. and the Moscow Soviet is published in *Lenin Miscellany XI*, p. 92. p. 365

[144] *Rada*—the Central Rada, a counter-revolutionary bourgeois-nationalist government set up in April 1917 at the All-Ukraine National Congress in Kiev by a bloc of Ukrainian bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist parties and groups. The chairman of the Rada was M. S. Grushevsky, ideologist of the Ukrainian bourgeoisie, the vice-chairman was V. K. Vinnichenko. Among its members were Petlyura, Yefremov, Antonovich and other nationalists.

After the victory of the October Revolution the Rada declared itself the supreme organ of the "Ukrainian People's Republic", opposed Soviet power and became one of the main centres of counter-revolution.

In December 1917, at the First All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets, which took place in Kharkov, the Ukraine was proclaimed a Soviet republic. The Congress also declared the power of the Central Rada overthrown. The Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R. recognised the Ukrainian Soviet Government as the sole legitimate government of the Ukraine and passed a decision that it should be given immediate assistance in its struggle against the counter-revolutionary Rada. In December 1917 and January 1918, armed uprisings against the Central Rada and for the establishment of Soviet power flared up in all parts of the Ukraine. In January 1918, Soviet troops in the Ukraine launched an offensive and on January 26 (February 8) occupied Kiev and deposed the bourgeois Rada.

Driven out of the Soviet Ukraine, the Central Rada allied itself with the German imperialists in order to overthrow Soviet power and restore the bourgeois regime in the Ukraine. During the peace negotiations between the Soviet Republic and Germany the Rada sent its delegation to Brest-Litovsk and behind the back of the Soviet delegation concluded a separate peace with Germany, by which it undertook to supply Germany with Ukrainian grain, coal, and raw materials in return for military assistance against Soviet power. In March 1918 the Rada, now a puppet in the hands of the German and Austrian invaders, returned to Kiev. Realising that the Rada was incapable of crushing the revolutionary

movement in the Ukraine and ensuring the delivery of supplies of food and raw materials, the Germans eventually abolished it. p. 375

[145] The reference is to the Treaty between Russia and Finnish Socialist Republics, which was endorsed in Petrograd on March 1, 1918 (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 1, 1957, pp. 505-10. p. 380

[146] *Moscow Regional Conference of the Russian Communist Party* (*Bolsheviks*) was held May 14-17, 1918. The conference heard reports from the provinces (Tver, Vladimir and Yaroslavl gubernias) concerning the state of Party work, the growth of the Red Army and other questions, and discussed the reports of the Moscow Regional Bureau and the Moscow Committee of the Party, and also of the Moscow Area Party organisation. On May 15, the conference discussed the current situation. A report sharply criticising the foreign policy of the Bolshevik Central Committee on behalf of the "Left Communists" was made by A. Lomov (G. I. Oppokov). This report was followed by a report by Lenin. After the debate and replies to the debate by Lenin and Lomov the conference decided by 47 votes to 9 in favour of accepting as the basis for its resolution Lenin's "Theses on the Present Political Situation" (see this volume, pp. 360-64). In reply to this, when a new Regional Bureau of the R.C.P.(B.) was elected, the "Left Communists" refused to join it. p. 382

[147] *First All-Russia Congress of Representatives of the Financial Departments of the Regional, Gubernia and Uyezd Soviets* was held in Moscow, May 17-21, 1918. It was attended by 230 delegates. The following subjects were on the agenda: reports from the provinces; general financial policy; local finances; banks, treasury and tax inspection; correct use of credits; organisational problems.

Lenin spoke at the evening session on May 18. The propositions in his report on the tasks of Soviet financial policy formed the basis of the resolution moved by the Communist group at the Congress; the resolution was accepted by the majority of delegates. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries moved a resolution of their own but after the debate withdrew it and voted for the communist resolution. The Congress gave a commission of six people the task of drawing up together with the Commissariat for Finances as quickly as possible a number of decisions: on a progressive income tax and a general property tax "on the basis of Comrade Lenin's theses"; on a system of indirect taxes based on state monopolies; on centralisation of taxation and banking; on reform of the currency; on the "uniform centralised organisation of the whole (local and central) apparatus of financial administration". p. 383

[148] *Conference of Representatives of the Metal Works Due for Nationalisation* was held in Moscow, May 12-18, 1918. It was attended

by 6 representatives from each works: 3 workers, 2 engineers and one representative from the managerial side. The conference discussed the problems involved in nationalising large works like those at Bryansk, Kolomna, Sormovo, Byeloretsk, Zlatoust Tver and the Baltic Works in Petrograd.

Before the conference took place, the subject had been discussed by various economic and trade union bodies and by the Council of People's Commissars. During this discussion the proposal (known as the Meshchersky plan) put forward by the capitalists and bourgeois experts to amalgamate the big machine-building works in a capitalist joint-stock company controlled by the state was rejected and it was decided that these enterprises should be nationalised. On May 17, the conference came out in favour of nationalisation. Only the group of bourgeois experts, who had a voice but no vote, defended the Meshchersky plan.

Lenin's letter, which was read out at the morning session on May 18, was greeted with loud applause. As Lenin proposed, the conference elected a temporary committee to organise the amalgamation of the state metal works under the Supreme Economic Council, confirmed the Regulations on the Committee, and also the instructions on the management of nationalised enterprises.

The share companies of the Sormovo and Byeloretsk iron works and the Kolomna machine-building works and others were nationalised on June 18, 1918. They were amalgamated as the Temporary Central Board of the Sormovo-Kolomna Amalgamated National Machine-Building Works. When the Bryansk, Mytishchi, Tver and other machine-building works were added to this organisation, it became known as the State Amalgamation of Machine-Building Works. p. 388

[149] *The Bryansk Regulations*—the Provisional Regulations of Internal Management drawn up by the factory trade union committee and the workers' management of the nationalised Bryansk Rail-rolling, Iron-making and Machine Works in Bezhitsa (now the Krasny Profintern Works). On May 9, 1918 they were published as an order signed by the works trade union committee and the director of the works. The Regulations were drawn up on the basis of the Statute on Labour Discipline, which had been passed by the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions on April 3, 1918. They instituted a firm system of discipline at the works and helped to strengthen one-man management in industry. p. 388

[150] This was written by Lenin at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars on May 20, 1918. It formed the basis of the final text of an appeal telegraphed to the Petrograd Party Committee with the following instruction attached: "Publish the following appeal at all mills and factories and take steps for the immediate organisation of enrolment in the food detachments".

On May 22, 1918, this appeal was published over the signature of Lenin and A, D. Tsyurupa in the newspaper *Petrogradskaya Pravda* No. 103, and on May 29 *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 107 and in other newspapers. p. 390

[151] *On the Famine* (*A Letter to the Petrograd Workers*) was written by Lenin after a conversation with A. V. Ivanov, chairman of the Putilov (now Kirov) Works purchasing commission. Lenin paid close attention to what the Putilov workers' representative had to say, then asked him to tell the Petrograd workers that the Government was "taking resolute measures to improve the country's food situation" and handed him a copy of a decree to pass on to the Putilov workers. The decree gave the People's Commissar for Food emergency powers to fight the famine. In a letter to A. D. Tsyurupa, Lenin wrote of his conversation with Ivanov: "I told him my opinion: if the *best* Petrograd workers do not create a *picked*, reliable workers' army" for a campaign against the rural bourgeoisie, "famine and the destruction of the revolution are inevitable" (*Lenin Miscellany XVIII*, p. 163). Lenin told the People's Commissariat for Food to give every assistance to the Petrograd workers' detachments.

At the beginning of June 1918, the Petrograd workers sent off their first food detachment of 400 men. p. 391

[152] *The Second All-Russia Congress of Commissars for Labour* took place in Moscow, May 18-25, 1918. It was attended by representatives of the regional, gubernia, and uyezd commissariats for labour, labour exchanges, hospital and insurance funds and associations, unemployment funds, the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions and other organisations—about 600 people in all. The agenda included the following items: report of the People's Commissariat for Labour; the situation in industry, labour discipline and the raising of labour productivity; standards of payment and standards of productivity; the economic position of the working class. The Congress worked in five committees (commissars for labour, labour exchanges, protection of labour, insurance, and statistics). The Congress approved the Statute of the A.C.C.T.U. of April 3, 1918, on Labour Discipline and the Statute on Rate-Fixing; on the basis of these statutes, resolutions were passed on labour discipline, wages policy, the economic position of the working class and other matters. The Congress also passed a law on protection of labour and a decision of the setting up in the provinces of bureaus for fixing wages and work quotas. p. 399

[153] The question of founding a Socialist Academy of Social Sciences was discussed by the Council of People's Commissars on May 25, 1918. The draft statute for the Academy submitted by the People's Commissariat for Education did not satisfy Lenin and he drew up the proposals published here; apparently they were written during the meeting. They were subsequently approved by the C.P.C.

On June 7, the Government considered the Statute of the Socialist Academy which had been revised on the basis of Lenin's proposals. The Decree (Statute) of the All-Russia C.E.C. on the Socialist Academy of Social Sciences was published on July 12, 1918, in the newspaper *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 145 (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 2, 1959, pp. 468-79). The Academy was officially opened on October 1, 1918. p. 404

[154] Lists of Members of the Socialist Academy of Social Sciences and teachers at the Academy, which had been approved by the All-Russia C.E.C., were published on August 9. 1918, in the newspaper *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 169.

On February 5, 1922, Lenin was elected a member of the Socialist Academy. When he was informed of his election by the Presidium of the Academy, Lenin replied with the following note: "I am very grateful. Unfortunately, I am not well enough to be able to perform even the smallest fraction of the duties of a member of the Socialist Academy. I do not want to be a fictitious member. I therefore request you to remove my name from the list of members or not to include it in the list" (*Lenin Miscellany XXXIV*, p. 432). p. 405

[155] *Theses on the Current Situation* were written when the country was undergoing a very serious food shortage. The Council of People's Commissars was guided by these theses on May 28, 1918, when it passed a decision on food policy (see *Lenin Miscellany XVIII*, p. 95) instructing the People's Commissariat for Food to draw up by the following day an appeal to the workers and peasants on the organisation of armed detachments to be used in the campaign for grain. The appeal, which was drawn up on the basis of Lenin's theses, was approved by the Government on May 29 and published in the newspapers on May 31 on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars. p. 406

[156] *The First All-Russia Congress of Economic Councils* was held May 26 to June 4, 1918, in Moscow; it was attended by 252 delegates representing 5 regional, 30 gubernia and a considerable number of uyezd economic councils, and also departments of the Supreme Economic Council, trade union organisations and factory trade union committees.

Lenin took a direct part in preparing the Congress. At a meeting of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council, which was held in the Kremlin on May 23, and attended by Lenin, matters connected with the Congress were examined in detail; the agenda was decided upon and the theses of a number of reports were approved with alterations and amendments. During the discussion of the theses of G. D. Veinberg's report on the management of the nationalised enterprises Lenin moved that the system of managing nationalised enterprises should be cut down to include only factory management boards on the spot and a central managing board—the production department of the Supreme Economic Council—all intermediate

boards being eliminated. Other items included in the Congress agenda were: the economic consequences of the Brest Treaty; Russia's general economic position and economic policy; the work of the Supreme Economic Council; Russia's financial position; the state budget; foreign trade; the Committee of State Construction; reports from the provinces. Some of the questions were examined by the committees on the organisation of production, labour, trade and agriculture.

At the opening session of the Congress Lenin made a speech outlining the immediate tasks of economic construction and the organisation of management of the nationalised economy. Lenin's plan for the organisation of socialist production and management on the principle of democratic centralism was opposed at the Congress by the "Left Communists", the anarcho-syndicalists, the Mensheviks and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. The Statute drawn up under Lenin's direction was passed by the Congress. The Congress also took important decisions on other questions, following the principles set out by Lenin. These were on the need for carrying out further socialist nationalisation, on trade between town and country, and on the reorganisation of the Supreme Economic Council. The Congress worked out measures for improving labour discipline and raising the productivity of labour and declared the production of agricultural machines and implements to be a matter of primary state importance. p. 408

[157] This document was written by Lenin in connection with requests from various organisations to be allowed to procure food independently. On May 29, 1918, the appeal to workers and peasants on the organisation of armed grain detachments, based on Lenin's "Theses on the Current Situation" (see this volume, pp. 406-07), was discussed at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars in the presence of representatives of these organisations. During the discussion, Lenin wrote the People's Commissar for Food A. D. Tsyurupa the following note: "Is there going to be a struggle over 'independent procuring'? Perhaps not? Shall we publish the attached in the newspapers, and in whose name?" (*Lenin Miscellany XVIII*, p. 106). To this Tsyurupa replied: "There will be a struggle. The attached should be published in the name of the Council of People's Commissars." "The attached" was the draft appeal published here. It was passed with slight amendments on June 1 as a decision of the Council of People's Commissars and published on June 4 in the newspaper *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 112 under the heading "Decision of the Council of People's Commissars on the Question of Independent Procuring". p. 416

[158] The Joint Session of the All-Russia C.E.C., the Moscow Soviet of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies, the A.C.C.T.U. and the trade unions, factory committees and other workers' organisations was held on June 4, 1918 in the Bolshoi Theatre. There was only one question on the agenda—the struggle against

famine in connection with the general situation. Opening the session, Y. M. Sverdlov, Chairman of the All-Russia C.E.C., said that such a widely representative meeting had been called in view of the extreme urgency of the problem and in order to draw all the workers of Moscow into an energetic campaign against famine. The report at the session was delivered by Lenin. Left and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks made sharp attacks on the Soviet Government and criticised its food policy. The resolution moved by the Bolshevik group, which was based on Lenin's draft, was passed by a majority vote. p. 419

[159] Lenin is expounding an idea expressed by Engels in his *Einleitung zu Sigismund Borkheims Broschüre zur Erinnerune für die deutschen Mordspatrioten. 1806-1807* (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Band 21, S. 346-51). p. 422

[160] Lenin has in mind the All-Russia Conference of Mensheviks (held in Moscow, May 21-27, 1918), which showed up the counter-revolutionary nature of the Mensheviks' activity. In their speeches N. Cherevanin, V. G. Groman and other Mensheviks tried to exploit the country's food difficulties for anti-Soviet purposes. They described the organisation of food detachments and the "crusade" for grain which Lenin was urging upon the workers as "the last convulsive efforts" of Soviet power to save itself. p. 429

[161] *Zhizn* (Life)—a newspaper published in Moscow from April 23 to July 6, 1918 under the editorship of the anarchistic writers A. Borovoi and Y. Novomirsky. Made use of by various anti-Soviet elements, it was eventually banned along with other counter-revolutionary newspapers. p. 429

[162] Lenin is referring to the All-Russia C.E.C. decrees: On the Emergency Powers of the People's Commissar for Food of May 13 (The Food Dictatorship Decree) and On the Reorganisation of the Commissariat for Food and Local Food Bodies of May 27, 1918 (see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 2, 1959, pp. 261-64 and 307-12) These decrees instituted complete centralisation of food supply, both procuring and distribution; they also envisaged measures for the organisation of a workers' grain campaign and help for the poor in their struggle against the kulaks. p. 432

[163] Lenin has in mind a resolution moved at the Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets by the Right and Centre S.R.s, in which they expressed strong opposition to the Peace Treaty of Brest and demanded the immediate abolition of Soviet power and the holding of a Constituent Assembly. p. 441

[164] The reference is to the counter-revolutionary armed revolt of the Czechoslovak Army Corps organised by the imperialists of the Entente with the active connivance of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The Czechoslovak corps had been formed in

Russia before the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution out of Czech and Slovak prisoners-of-war. By the summer of 1918 it numbered over 60,000 men (the total number of Czech and Slovak war prisoners in Russia was nearly 200,000). After the setting up of Soviet power the financing of the corps was taken over by the countries of the Entente, which had decided to use it against the Soviet Republic. T. Massarik, leader of the Czech bourgeois nationalists and president of the Czechoslovak National Council, declared the corps to be part of the French army and the representatives of the Entente raised the question of its evacuation to France. The Soviet Government agreed to the evacuation of the Czechoslovaks on condition that the Russian soldiers in France were sent home. By the agreement of March 26, 1918, the corps was granted permission to quit Russia via Vladivostok on condition that they handed in their arms and deposed their counter-revolutionary commanders, who were Russian officers. But the counter-revolutionary commanders of the corps treacherously broke the agreement with the Soviet Government on the surrendering of arms and, on instructions from the imperialists of the Entente instigated an armed revolt at the end of May. The governments of the United States, Britain and France openly and whole-heartedly supported the revolt and French officers took a direct part in it. Operating in close contact with the whiteguards and the kulaks, the corps occupied a large part of the Urals, the Volga area and Siberia, everywhere restoring the rule of the bourgeoisie. With the support of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries whiteguard governments were set up in the occupied areas. A Siberian "government" was set up in Omsk, a Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly in Samara, and so forth.

Soon after the revolt started, on June 11, the Central Executive Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist groups in Russia issued a manifesto to the soldiers of the corps, exposing the counter-revolutionary nature of the revolt and appealing to these Czech and Slovak workers and peasants to put a stop to it and join the Czechoslovak units of the Red Army. The majority of the Czech and Slovak prisoners-of-war were sympathetic towards Soviet power and refused to be taken in by the anti-Soviet propaganda of the reactionary clique in command. Realising that they were being tricked, many of the rank and file left the corps and refused to fight against Soviet power. Nearly 12,000 Czechs and Slovaks served in the ranks of the Red Army.

The Volga area was liberated by the Red Army in the autumn of 1918 and the whiteguard Czechoslovaks were finally defeated during the victorious campaign against Kolchak. p. 441

[165] The reference is to the reports delivered at the All-Russia C.E.C. meetings by the People's Commissar for Food A. D. Tsyurupa (May 9, 1918) and A. I. Svidersky (May 27) on reorganisation of the food bodies and the system of food supply. p. 442

[166] This draft resolution formed the basis of the resolution submitted by the Bolshevik group at the meeting of June 4, 1918. It was accepted by a joint meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C., the Moscow Soviet and the Trade Unions, which rejected the Left S.R. resolution aimed against organisation of the poor, against fixed prices for grain and other measures initiated by the Soviet Government. p. 444

[167] *Union of Internationalist Teachers* was set up at the beginning of December 1917 in opposition to the counter-revolutionary All-Russia Union of Teachers. The new union was for teachers who bad come over to the side of Soviet power. It set itself the aim of rallying democratic teachers and winning over the waverers. In a manifesto published in *Pravda* on December 6 (19) the union appealed to teachers to join the union and work with the people to "create a new, socialist school". The response was immediate and by the spring of 1918 the Union had 12,000 members. It formed the nucleus of the Union of Educational Workers that was set up in August 1919.

The *First All-Russia Congress of Internationalist Teachers* was held in Moscow June 2-6, 1918; it was attended by 150 delegates with the right to vote. The Congress heard and discussed the following reports: tasks of the Union of Internationalist Teachers; reform of the schools; general plan for the reorganisation of public education; polytechnical education; organisational and propaganda tasks of the new teacher; teachers' living standards; draft rules for the Union of Internationalist Teachers; report by N. K. Krupskaya "The School and the State", and others. The first speaker at the Congress was A. V. Lunacharsky, People's Commissar for Education who outlined the role of the Soviet teacher in the sphere of public education. In its resolutions the Congress called for "energetic support of the power of the workers and peasants in their struggle to consolidate socialism", defined the tasks of the Soviet school as polytechnical and based on initiative and productive labour, approved the rules of the Union, and proposed to the People's Commissariat for Education that a Pedagogical Academy should be founded.

Lenin spoke at the fourth session of the Congress. p. 445

[168] Lenin delivered this speech on the food detachments to workers' meetings in Moscow and it was published in *Bednota* (The Poor), a daily newspaper issued by the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.). The first food detachments were sent out from Petrograd and Moscow to the grain-growing provinces in November 1917. Mass recruiting for the detachments among the advanced workers began in the summer of 1918, when the food crisis was at its height. The food detachments were formed by the Party, Soviet and trade union organisations of Petrograd, Moscow and other industrial centres. There were about 3,000 people in them by June 15, and by the end of August the number had risen to nearly 17,000. In 1918 there were 122 detachments and in 1919, more than 1,000, with an enrolment

of about 30,000 men. These workers' food detachments played a big part in procuring food for the population and the Red Army, in fighting the kulaks and rallying the rural poor. p. 448

[169] Lenin is referring to a food detachment that operated in the village of Kulikovo, Usman Uyezd, Tambov Gubernia. With the help of the poor people of the area the detachment confiscated from the kulaks hidden arms and a large amount of grain—4,073 poods of rye, 1,006 poods of oats, 428 poods of millet and 188 poods of flour (one pood = 36 lbs.). More than half the requisitioned grain was given to the famine-stricken village of Kulikovo. The village Soviet, which had consisted formerly of kulaks, was re-elected with the support of the detachment. p. 453

[170] This telegram was sent to the Second Gubernia Congress of Soviets in Penza in reply to a letter from the Chairman of the Penza Gubernia Soviet A. Y. Minkin. When the Congress opened on June 24, 1918, it elected Lenin its honorary chairman. p. 454

[171] *Poor Peasants' Committees* were instituted by a decree of the All-Russia C.E.C. of June 11, 1918, on the Organisation and Supply of the Rural Poor, which encouraged the practice of setting up such committees on the initiative of the rank and file. By November 1918, 105,000 poor peasants' committees had been formed and were operating in the provinces under the leadership of the Communist Party. The decree charged the committees to keep account of the food supplies in the peasant farms, expose hoarding by kulaks, and help the Soviet food organisations in the work of confiscating their surpluses. They were also to guard and deliver confiscated grain to state storage points; provide food for the poor at the expense of the kulak farms; distribute farm implements and industrial goods; organise sowing and harvesting campaigns; guard sown fields; and combat bag-trading and profiteering on grain. The practical work of the poor peasants' committees, however, embraced all aspects of village life. They were, in fact, strongpoints of proletarian dictatorship in the countryside. Their organisation heralded the further development of the socialist revolution in the villages.

The committees played an outstanding part in suppressing the kulak counter-revolution and in breaking the economic power of the kulaks by partially expropriating them. In a comparatively short time the committees confiscated from the kulaks and distributed among the poor and middle peasants 50 million hectares of land and confiscated from the kulaks a large quantity of farm implements for use by poor peasants and hard-up middle peasants. They also did good work in finally abolishing landed proprietorship and keeping the famine-stricken urban workers and units of the Red Army supplied with food. The committees took an active part in organising collective agricultural enterprises—artels and communes—which along with the state farms were the first

centres of socialist-type economic organisation in the villages; between the time the committees were set up and the end of 1918 the number of collective peasant enterprises increased, according to incomplete data, from 240 to 1,600. Volunteer detachments and regiments for the Red Army were formed from among the rural poor on the initiative of the poor peasants' committees. The committees did a lot towards consolidating the local Soviets and freeing them from kulak influence.

The work of the committees was of immense importance in consolidating the alliance of the working class and the peasantry and in winning the middle peasant over to Soviet power. Lenin stressed that the organisation and activities of the committees should be planned to take in not only the poor peasants but the middle peasants as well. During the discussion of the draft decree on poor peasants' committees he pointed out the need to draw the middle peasant into the work of the committees (see Lenin's amendments to the decree in *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Vol. 2, 1959, pp. 413-16).

By the autumn of 1918 the poor peasants' committees had fulfilled their historic role in the socialist revolution. In this connection and also in connection with the need for "completing Soviet construction by the creation of a uniform organisation of Soviets throughout the territory of the Soviet Republic", the Extraordinary Sixth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which was held in November 1918, proposed the re-election of all volost and village Soviets, to be organised by the poor peasants' committees. According to the election instructions published by the All-Russia C.E.C. on December 4, 1918, the poor peasants' committees were to wind up their activities after the election campaign and hand over all their equipment and records to the new Soviets. p. 455

[172] *Fourth Conference of Trade Unions and Factory Committees of Moscow* was held from June 27 to July 2, 1918 . It was attended by 472 delegates with a vote and 71 with a voice but no vote; 341 of them were Communists, 34 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, 24 Mensheviks, 9 Right S.R.s, and 64 non-party people and representatives of other groups. The Conference considered the food situation; universal military training and mobilisation; labour discipline; work of the labour exchange; rules of the factory committees, etc. Lenin delivered a report on the vital question of food supply. The Conference passed a resolution based on the draft proposed by Lenin. In spite of opposition from the Mensheviks and S.R.s, the Conference approved the resolutions moved by the Communist group on all questions. p. 457

[173] In May-June 1918, Austria-Hungary was swept by a wave of strikes, demonstrations and mass protests by the workers of a political and anti-militarist nature. A big strike was launched in Vienna in the middle of June over the reduction of the bread ration; Soviets of Workers' Deputies (*Arbeiterräte*) came into being and started operating in Vienna, Budapest and other cities.

The Vienna Soviet presented the government with the strikers' demands: conclusion of peace, increase of wages, reduction of working hours and restoration of the former bread ration. The Social-Democratic leaders were unable to prevent the strike but they succeeded in making the Vienna Soviet abandon it.

The first Soviets of Workers' Deputies and Soldiers' Deputies were formed during the strike campaign in Vienna, Budapest and other cities in January 1918. A political strike, which spread to the industrial centres of Austria-Hungary, was declared in Vienna on January 14 in protest against the rapacious demands made on Soviet Russia by the governments of the Austro-German bloc during the peace negotiations. Strike calls went out for immediate conclusion of general peace on the terms proposed by Soviet Russia, abolition of wartime laws and the censorship, an amnesty for political prisoners, fair distribution of food, etc. The movement was crushed and the Soviets broken up with the direct support of the opportunist leaders of the Austrian Social-Democrats. p. 461

[174] Lenin met delegates from the Yelets Soviet of Deputies on May 30, 1918. After they had talked together Lenin handed them a letter to the Editors of *Izvestia VTsIK* in which he wrote: "To be delivered by representatives of the Yelets Soviet of Deputies. Please publish an interview with them in the paper. This is a model uyezd as regards order, accounting and management of *large modern farms*, and as regards the *suppression* of the bourgeoisie" (*Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*, p. 45). The day before he spoke at the conference, June 26, Lenin met the Deputy People's Commissar for Internal Affairs I. G. Pravdin, who had returned from an inspection tour of Tula, Yelets and Orel, and talked to him about the situation in these areas (see *Lenin Miscellany XVIII*, pp 116 and 179). p. 473

[175] Lenin is referring to the article "The Secret Treaties Exposed", printed on November 28, 1917, in the newspaper *Vorwärts* (Forward) No. 326. It was admitted in this article that "by publishing the secret despatches exchanged between St. Petersburg and Paris the Bolshevik Government of Russia is performing a truly revolutionary act".

Vorwärts was the main daily newspaper of the German Social-Democratic Party and had been coming out in Berlin since 1891. In the late nineties, after the death of Engels the editorship of the paper fell into the hands of the Right wing of the party and began systematically printing articles by opportunists. During the imperialist war of 1914-18 *Vorwärts* took up a position of social-chauvinism; after the Great October Socialist Revolution the paper conducted anti-Soviet propaganda. It continued appearing in Berlin until 1933. p. 479

[176] The reference is to V. A. Tikhomirov, a representative of the Bogorodsk Soviet of Workers' Deputies, who was also at the time chairman of the Bogorodsk co-operatives union. p. 482

[177] Lenin is referring to the article "The French Millions", published June 28, 1918, in *Prukopnik Svobody* (Pioneer of Freedom), the main newspaper of the C.E.C. of the Czechoslovak Communist groups in Soviet Russia. In this article it was stated that the French and British governments had given the Czechoslovak white-guards about 15 million rubles. The article was reprinted on the same day in *Pravda* No. 130 and a summary appeared in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 132. p. 482

[178] Lenin has in mind a group of print workers which had for a long time been under the influence of the Mensheviks and Right S.R.s who ran the yellow Union of Printing Trade Workers. After the October Revolution this union opposed Soviet power and organised strikes in Moscow, Petrograd and other cities. The Bolsheviks and Left Internationalists had their groups in all the large printshops and founded the Red Union of Printers. When this union was organised, the influence of the yellow union began to decline. p. 485

[179] The Black Sea fleet was moved from Sevastopol to Novorossiisk on April 29-30, 1918, on orders from the Soviet Government because the Crimea was being occupied by the German imperialists. Lenin set forth the circumstances concerning the fleet's removal and its possible return to Sevastopol in the "Protest to the German Government against the Occupation of the Crimea". Since there was no possibility of saving the fleet and the Soviet Government did not wish to surrender it to the German imperialists, who had presented an ultimatum demanding the return of the fleet to Sevastopol, Lenin sent the following instruction to the Supreme Military Council: "In view of the hopelessness of the situation, which has been proved by the highest military authorities, the fleet must be destroyed immediately" (see *History of the Civil War in the U.S.S.R.*, Vol. 3, 1957, p, 139). On June 18-19 the government's order was carried out. Most of the ships were scuttled off Novorossiisk. p. 485

[180] The reference is to the elections to the Petrograd Soviet in June 1918. During the elections the Mensheviks and S.R.s conducted a bitter struggle against the Bolsheviks, resorting even to terrorism (on June 20 during the elections V. Volodarsky, an active member of the Communist Party, was assassinated by a Right S.R.). The Communists won the election. The first session of the Soviet on June 27 was attended by 405 Bolsheviks and Bolshevik sympathisers, 75 Left S.R.s, 59 Menshevik defencists and Right S.R.s and 43 non-party people. p. 490

[181] On June 28, 1918, on the instructions of the Moscow Party Committee meetings on the subject of the Civil War were held in all districts of Moscow. These enthusiastic mass meetings showed the working people's growing trust in the Communist Party, their

support for its policy and condemnation of the counter-revolutionary parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were supporting the bourgeoisie whose actions had led to civil war. The meetings were addressed by prominent Party workers and also delegates from the Urals, the Volga country and other areas, who had come to Moscow for the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets. The delegates described the counter-revolutionary activities of the Mensheviks and S.R.s and the fierce struggle the kulaks were waging against Soviet power.

Lenin spoke at the AMO Works (Simonovsky Sub-District), the former Mikhelson Works (Zamoskvorechye District) and in the Soviet Gardens in Rogozhsky District.

Four thousand workers and other employees at the former Mikhelson Works listened to Lenin's speech with the greatest attention and stated in their resolution that they approved the Moscow Soviet's decision of June 25, 1918 on the expulsion "for ever from the Soviets" of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (Right and Centre), who, as members of the Soviets, had sabotaged their work and tried to overthrow Soviet power with the aid of foreign imperialists. The meeting appealed to all working people to "recall from all Soviets and their institutions the Right S.R.s and Mensheviks, who criminally and shamefully reside in the camp of the dark forces of the counter-revolution in order to betray our workers' cause". p. 492

[182] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Band 21, S. 350-51. Diets Verlag. Berlin. p. 495

[183] On July 2, 1918, meetings of men called up for the Red Army were held in Moscow. The public meeting in the former Alexeyevsky Riding School was attended by about 1,500 mobilised men and Red Army volunteers. After Lenin and other speakers had addressed the meeting there was a concert. The atmosphere at the meeting was one of great enthusiasm.

The same day Lenin went to a meeting at the Salamonsky Circus but did not speak because the meeting did not start on time. p. 500

[184] The meetings of the Communist group at the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets before the Congress opened were held July 1-3, 1918; they were attended by about 500 Communist delegates who had arrived for the Congress. The first meeting was opened by Y. M. Sverdlov, Chairman of the All-Russia C.E.C. After speaking briefly of the tasks before the Congress, he informed the delegates about the work that had been done on drawing up a draft Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. Lenin spoke on July 3 on the foreign and domestic affairs of the Republic. After his speech a resolution approving the policy of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars was passed unanimously. The group heard reports from the provinces and discussed and approved the Congress agenda. p. 502

[185] *Entente cordiale*—bloc of imperialist powers (Britain, France and Russia) formed at the beginning of this century in opposition to the imperialists of the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy). It took its name from the Anglo-French agreement of 1904. During the world imperialist war of 1914-18 the United States, Japan and other countries joined the Entente. After the Great October Socialist Revolution the chief members of the bloc, Britain, France, the U.S.A. and Japan, inspired, organised and participated in the armed intervention against Soviet Russia. p. 502

[186] *Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets* opened on July 4, 1918 in the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. It was attended by 1,164 delegates with the right to vote. These included 773 Bolsheviks, 353 Left S.R.s, 17 Maximalists (a variety of Left S.R.s), 4 anarchists, 4 Menshevik-Internationalists, 3 members of other parties and 10 non-party people. Among the delegates there were representatives of the German-occupied areas of the Ukraine, Latvia, and Transcaucasia, who brought greetings and described the situation in these areas. The Congress was greeted by the representative of the British Socialist Party, Joseph Fineberg, who read out a resolution passed by his party's conference declaring its support for the socialist revolution in Russia. The Congress also received greetings from the working people of Germany and Norway, and from Russian prisoners-of-war interned in various countries.

The Congress approved the agenda proposed by the Presidium of the All-Russia C.E.C., which included the following items: reports of the All-Russia C.E.C. and the Council of People's Commissars, the food question; organisation of the socialist Red Army; Constitution of the Russian Soviet Republic; elections to the All-Russia C.E.C. The Congress rejected the Left S.R. demand that reports from the provinces and a discussion on the Soviet Government's decision to introduce capital punishment for treason should be added to the agenda.

After the agenda had been approved, the Congress discussed a question that was not on the agenda concerning incidents in the area bordering on the Ukraine, where Mensheviks and S.R.s were agitating among the military units in the area with the aim of causing a clash with the Germans and thus sabotaging the peace treaty with Germany and drawing the country into war. In their explanation to the Congress the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries demagogically accused the Communist Party of not wishing to help the working people of the occupied areas, refused to discuss the resolution moved by the Communist group and walked out of the meeting. The Congress unanimously resolved that "decisions on matters of war and peace rest solely with the All-Russia Congress of Soviets" and the central organs of Soviet power—the All-Russia C.E.C. and the Council of People's Commissars, and advised the Soviet Government to deal firmly with all agents provocateurs.

Y. M. Sverdlov delivered the report on the work of the All-

Russia C.E.C. Lenin reported on the work of the Council of People's Commissars. After stormy debates on the two reports the Congress passed the Communist group's resolution expressing "complete approval of the foreign and domestic policy of the Soviet Government". The Left S.R. resolution calling for a vote of no confidence in the Soviet Government, denunciation of the Brest Peace Treaty, and a change in the home and foreign policy of Soviet power was rejected.

Defeated at the Congress, the Left S.R.s resorted to use of force, and on July 6 launched an armed counter-revolutionary insurrection in Moscow. The Congress adjourned until July 9. When it met again to discuss the events of July 6-7, the Congress fully approved the government's resolute measures to deal with the criminal venture of the Left S.R.s and stated that the Left S.R.s who shared the views of their ruling clique "can have no place in the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies".

In a resolution on the report by the People's Commissar for Food A. D. Tsyurupa the Congress endorsed the grain monopoly, stressed the need for resolute suppression of kulak resistance and approved the setting up of the poor peasants' committees.

At its final session on July 10, the Congress heard a report on the organisation of the Red Army and unanimously approved the Communist group's resolution outlining essential measures for organising and consolidating the Red Army on the basis of compulsory military service by the working people.

The Congress completed its work with an act of the greatest historical significance. It passed the first Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R., thus legislatively consolidating the gains of the working people of Soviet Russia. p. 505

[187] The "previous speaker" was M. A. Spiridonova, one of the Left S.R. leaders. She had delivered a supplementary report to the Congress on the work of the peasant section of the All-Russia C.E.C., which contained a number of counter-revolutionary attacks on the policy of the Soviet Government, and the Communist Party. p. 507

[188] *Golos Trudovovo Krestyanstva* (Voice of the Labouring Peasantry) —daily newspaper that appeared in Petrograd from the end of November 1917 as the organ of the Executive Committee of the All-Russia Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, Second Convocation (until December 9 [22] it was known as *Izvestia of the All-Russia Peasant Congress*). On January 20 (February 2), 1918, it became the organ of the Peasant Section of the All-Russia C.E.C. Up to July 10, 1918, the paper was controlled by the Left S.R.s. On November 6, 1918, it became the organ of the People's Commissariat for Agriculture. It continued to appear until May 31, 1919. p. 512

[189] The reference is to the Draft Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, which was submitted for the approval of the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

A decision on preparation of a draft constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. had been passed in January 1918 by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets. But the Soviet Government was able to begin work on the draft only after the peaceful breathing-space had been gained. Lenin played a decisive part in drawing up the first Soviet Constitution.

The work of preparing the draft was done by the constitution commission set up by the All-Russia C.E.C. on April 1, 1918, under the chairmanship of Y. M. Sverdlov.

On Sverdlov's suggestion at a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. on June 14 the question of the Soviet Constitution was included on the agenda of the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets. The final drafting of the Constitution for submission to the Congress was entrusted to a commission of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) under the chairmanship of Lenin. On July 3 this commission considered two drafts of the Soviet Constitution—one made by the constitution commission of the All-Russia C.E.C. and another submitted by the People's Commissariat for Justice. The commission of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) took as the basis for the constitution the draft submitted by the constitution commission of the All-Russia C.E.C., adding some of the propositions put forward by the People's Commissariat for Justice. On Lenin's suggestion the following amendments were made: a Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People was included as a preamble to the Constitution; an article on national and racial equality in the Soviet Republic, and articles on the political rights of foreigners resident in the R.S.F.S.R. for purposes of work (Lenin's "Rough Draft of Point 20 of the Second Section of the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R.", which defines their rights) and on the granting of the right of asylum to all foreigners subjected to persecution for their political and religious beliefs (Lenin's amendments, see *Decrees of the Soviet Government*, Russ. ed., Vol. 2, 1959, pp. 546-49) were added. The commission of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.) also introduced a number of other important amendments and corrections. The draft passed by the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.) was submitted for approval by the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

On the first day of the Congress Sverdlov proposed setting up a commission to consider the draft Constitution and report on it to the Congress. The commission was formed from among representatives of the various groups; it made a few changes of a stylistic nature, added several articles to the section on budget rights and introduced a new section on the arms and flag of the R.S.F.S.R. At its final session on July 10 the Congress heard the report of the commission on the draft Constitution, after which it unanimously approved the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. and entrusted the final work of editing the text to the new All-Russia C.E.C.

On July 19, 1918, the Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic was published as the Fundamental Law and came into force as from the date of publication. p. 515

[190] The reference is to the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission of the Council of People's Commissars, whose Chairman was F. E. Dzerzhinsky.

The *All-Russia Extraordinary Commission* (Cheka) was set up on December 7 (20), 1917 by decision of the Council of People's Commissars for the purpose of "ruthlessly combating counter-revolution, sabotage and profiteering". As the strong right arm of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Cheka played an enormous part in checking counter-revolutionary sabotage and in protecting the security of the Soviet Republic. Appraising the work of this commission, Lenin pointed out in his report to the Ninth All-Russia Congress of Soviets in December 1921: "...It was our effective weapon against the numerous plots and numerous attacks on Soviet power" (see V. I. Lenin, *Report on Peace*, Moscow, p. 262). In its Resolution on the Cheka the Ninth Congress noted the commission's heroic work in protecting the gains of the October Revolution and, in view of the consolidation of Soviet power, proposed curtailing the commission's sphere of activity. This resolution reflected proposals made by Lenin in a draft decision of the Political Bureau of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.) on the Cheka, which he wrote on December 1, 1921 (see *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*, p. 369). On February 6, 1922 the All-Russia C.E.C. passed a decree abolishing the Cheka. p. 519

[191] In the very first months of its existence Soviet power gave the collective farming enterprises considerable material and financial assistance. Estimates of the Current Land Policy Department of the People's Commissariat for Agriculture show that in the second half of 1918 fifteen million rubles were assigned to the organisation of agricultural communes and artels in the form of interest-free loans. Additionally the government assigned 10 million rubles for the same purpose in July 1918. A decree passed on November 2, 1918 "for the purpose of improving and developing agriculture and bringing about its speediest reorganisation on socialist principles" set up a fund of one thousand million rubles for financial and technical assistance to the labour associations and communes. The actual amount disbursed to communes and artels on the basis of this decree was considerably more than one thousand million rubles.

The collective farms enjoyed great advantages during the distribution of complex agricultural machinery, livestock and farm implements, and seed. State farms and collective farms were given priority by the state agricultural machine-hire points and repair stations that had been set up. p. 527

[192] *Committee of International Relations* was set up by the French Internationalists in January 1916. This was the first attempt to set up in France a revolutionary-internationalist organisation of socialists to counter the social-chauvinist organisations there. Lenin saw the value of the committee's work in rallying internationalists and on his instructions I. F. Armand took part in the committee's work.

Thanks to the influence of the October Revolution in Russia and the growing-strength of the French working-class movement the committee became a centre for people with revolutionary-internationalist views. In 1920 it merged with the French Communist Party.

The manifesto referred to by Lenin was published on June 29, 1918 in *Pravda* No. 131. p. 528

[193] Lenin is referring to a speech by a representative of the S.R.-Maximalist group Svetlov. p. 530

[194] Lenin has in mind the historic Decree of the Council of People's Commissars on the Nationalisation of Large-Scale Industry, passed on June 28, 1918 and published on June 30 in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 134. "According to a plan that had been outlined long before," Lenin wrote of this decree, "after extensive preparatory work a decree, whose appearance was impatiently-awaited by the masses of the people of Russia was finally published on June 28" (*Lenin Miscellany XXXV*, p. 27). The decree made all large industrial enterprises public property. In spite of enormous difficulties the work of nationalisation was carried out in a short period thanks to the organising work of the Communist Party and the energetic participation of the workers. By August 31, 1918 there were over 3,000 nationalised enterprises in the country.

Under the same decree, all private railways and also the public utilities (water supply, gasworks, urban transport, etc.) were made public property and put under the control of the local Soviets. p. 531

[195] *The counter-revolutionary insurrection of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in Moscow* (July 6-7, 1918) was organised in accordance with the decision of the C.C. of the Left S.R.s of June 24. It was part of a general attack by the internal counter-revolution and the imperialists of the Entente against Soviet Russia, and the insurrectionists were secretly supported by foreign diplomatic missions.

The insurrection was launched during the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, at which the anti-Soviet speeches of the Left S.R.s received no support from the overwhelming majority of delegates. Defeated at the Congress, the Left S.R.s pursued their aim of sabotaging the Brest Peace Treaty and dragging Soviet Russia into war with Germany by assassinating the German Ambassador in Moscow Count Mirbach on July 6. This was followed up by an insurrection. The main rebel force was a detachment commanded by D. I. Popov, a Left S.R. and member of the Cheka, About 1,800 people took part in the insurrection, bombarding the Kremlin with artillery and seizing the telephone exchange and telegraph office. During the two hours that they remained in control there, they sent out several provocatory manifestos, bulletins and telegrams in the name of the Left S.R. Central Commit-

tee alleging that the Left S.R.s had taken over power and that their action had been welcomed by, the whole population.

The Fifth Congress of Soviets instructed the government to suppress the insurrection at once, and the group of Left S.R.s at the Congress was arrested. Thanks to the energetic measure taken by the Soviet Government and the united action of the Moscow workers and garrison the insurrection was put down within twenty-four hours. By 2 p.m. on July 7 it was all over.

The Left S.R.s also tried to start insurrections in Petrograd, Vologda and other cities. A telegram from the Left S.R. Central Committee stating that the Left S.R.s had seized power in Moscow, was sent to M. A. Muravyov, a Left S.R. and Commander of the Eastern Front. On the pretext of attacking the Germans, he tried to seize Simbirsk (now Ulyanovsk) and march his forces on Moscow in support of the insurrectionists. Like the other insurrections, Muravyov's reckless attempt was quickly suppressed.

When the Fifth Congress of Soviets reassembled after the defeat of the insurrection, it passed a decision expelling from the Soviets the Left S.R.s who had supported the adventuristic line of their leadership. Numerous telegrams in which the workers and peasants expressed their approval of the suppression of the revolt and their readiness to take up arms to defend Soviet power reached the Congress from all parts of the country. p. 534

[196] At its first session on July 15, 1918 the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (5th Convocation) heard Lenin's speech and declaration and unanimously passed the following resolution: "The All-Russia Central Executive Committee wholly approves the statement of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and decrees that it shall be brought to the attention of the widest masses of the working people." A government statement under the title "Appeal of Comrade Lenin to the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers of the Red Army, Approved at the Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of July 15, 1918" was published on July 17 in *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 149.

The document has also been published under the title "Statement at a Meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. of July 15, 1918". p. 538

[197] On July 19, 1918 the meetings arranged every Friday by the Moscow Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) went off very well in all districts of Moscow. The meeting in Lefortovo District, at which Lenin spoke on the international and internal situation, was attended by about 2,000 people. p. 542

[198] *The Moscow Gubernia Conference of Factory Committees and Trade Unions* was held July 22-23, 1918. It was attended by 500 delegates, the majority of whom were Communists or Communist sympathisers. After Lenin's speech on the current situation the Communists moved a resolution, which had previously been approved, on

Lenin's report to the Fourth Conference of Trade Unions and Factory Committees of Moscow, which was held June 27-July 2, 1918. The resolution with a few minor amendments was passed by a large majority. p. 545

[199] *The Workers' Dreadnought* was published in London from March 1914 to June 1924; up to July 1917 it appeared under the title *Woman's Dreadnought*. From 1918 to 1919 it was the paper of the Workers' Socialist Federation and from 1920 to 1921 of the British Communist Party. p. 546

[200] On July 26, 1918 meetings were held in all districts of Moscow on the subject "What Does the Soviet Constitution Give the Working People". Prominent members of the Communist Party addressed the meetings explaining the importance of the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R., which had been adopted on July 10, 1918 by the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

Lenin addressed more than a thousand people assembled in the hall of the Higher Women's Courses. p. 551

THE LIFE AND WORK OF V. I. LENIN

Outstanding Dates
(*February-July 1918*)

1918

February 21 — Lenin's article "The Revolutionary Phrase" published in No. 31 of the newspaper *Pravda*.

Lenin holds a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars to discuss the question of accepting military-technical assistance from Britain, France and other countries to resist the German offensive.

Lenin writes the C.P.C. draft decree "The Socialist Fatherland Is in Danger!"

February 22 — Lenin writes the article "The Itch", published the same day in *Pravda* No. 33 (evening edition).

Lenin telephones the Commissar for Post and Telegraph Services in Moscow to inform him of the German offensive.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the setting up of an extraordinary commission for evacuating Petrograd, etc.

February 23 — Lenin attends a meeting of the Party C.C. and votes for immediate acceptance of the German Government's peace terms and for preparation of revolutionary war.

Lenin's article "Peace or War?" published in No. 34 of *Pravda* (evening edition).

At a joint meeting of the Bolshevik and Left Socialist-Revolutionary groups in the All-Russia C.E.C. Lenin urges acceptance of the German peace terms.

Lenin sends a telegram instructing the Command of the Don Front to recapture Rostov immediately.

Night of February 23 — Lenin speaks at a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. on the German peace terms.

February 24

Lenin's "An Unfortunate Peace" and "Theses on the Question of Concluding Immediately a Separate and Annexationist Peace" published in No. 34 of *Pravda*.

At a meeting of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) Lenin moves a proposal on the composition of the peace delegation to be sent to Brest. Proposal accepted.

Lenin writes a "Note on the Necessity of Signing the Peace Treaty".

Lenin and Sverdlov draft the message of the Organising Bureau of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) to Party members. The message is published under the heading "Position of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) on the Question of the Separate and Annexationist Peace".

Night of February 24

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the Soviet Republic's position in view of the German capture of Pskov.

February 25

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the question of a treaty between the R.S.F.S.R. and the Finnish Socialist Republic, drafts a decision, and makes amendments to the draft treaty.

Lenin's article "A Painful but Necessary Lesson" published in *Pravda* No. 35 (evening edition).

February 26

Lenin drafts the C.P.C. decision on the evacuation of the government from Petrograd to Moscow.

February 27

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the question of a trade treaty between the Russian and Finnish Republics and drafts the decision.

Lenin writes a C.P.C. instruction for the Russia-Finland Co-ordinative Commission on arranging full political rights for the citizens of both republics, for Finns in the R.S.F.S.R. and for Soviet citizens in Finland.

February 28

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C.

The beginning of Lenin's article "Strange and Monstrous" published in *Pravda* No. 37.

March 1

Conclusion of Lenin's article "Strange and Monstrous", and another article, "On a Businesslike Basis", published in *Pravda* No. 38.

March 2	Lenin drafts an order to all Soviets instructing them to prepare for defence in case the Germans break off the peace negotiations.
March 4	Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: organisation of the management of water transport (decision written by Lenin); state control; evacuation of government offices.
March 5	Lenin writes the article "A Serious Lesson and a Serious Responsibility".
March 6-8	Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Lenin elected to the Congress presidium. He directs the work of the Congress.
March 7	Lenin delivers the Central Committee's political report (the Report on War and Peace) at the second session of the Congress.
March 8	Lenin gives the reply to the debate on the report on war and peace at the fourth session of the Congress. The Congress approves the C.C. report and the resolution on war and peace moved by Lenin.
	At the fifth session of the Congress Lenin delivers a report on revision of the Party Programme and changing the name of the Party. The Congress approves Lenin's resolution on renaming the Party the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks); Lenin elected to the commission for revising the Party Programme.
	At the fifth session, Lenin elected a member of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.).
March, not earlier than March 8	From telegrams received by the Council of People's Commissars and the C.E.C. in response to the inquiry sent out to all Soviets of Deputies on February 25, 1918, Lenin compiles a "Table of Answers to the Question: Peace or War".
March 9	"Rough Outline of the Draft Programme", written by Lenin, published in No. 5 of the newspaper *Kommunist*.
	Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: evacuation of Petrograd industry; nationalisation of the oil industry.
March 10-11	Lenin and other members of the government move from Petrograd to Moscow.
March 11	Lenin writes the article "The Chief Task of Our Day".

March 12 — Lenin speaks on the current situation at a meeting of the Moscow Soviet and at a meeting in the Alexeyevsky Riding School.

March 13 — At a meeting of the Bolshevik group at the Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets Lenin speaks on the necessity of ratifying the peace treaty with Germany.

March 14 — Lenin speaks at a Moscow meeting of Social-Democrat Internationalists of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Bohemia and other countries.

March 14-16 — Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets. Lenin elected to the presidium and takes a leading part in the work of the Congress.

March 14 — The resolution drafted by Lenin concerning President Wilson's message to the Extraordinary Fourth Congress approved by the Congress.

Lenin delivers the report on ratification of the peace treaty at the Fourth Congress.

March 15 — Lenin replies to the debate on ratification of the peace treaty; his resolution on ratification approved by the Congress.

March 18 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss replacement of the Left S.R.s and "Left" Communists who have withdrawn from the government, and banning of the Moscow bourgeois press. He also moves a resolution on centralisation of management of the railways.

March 19 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the question of organising a Supreme Military Council and other matters.

March 23 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss setting up of state control over all forms of insurance (makes notes for a draft decision); centralisation of management of the railways (defends the decree on this subject). The C.P.C. sets up a commission under Lenin's chairmanship to deal with the problem of building narrow-gauge railways for supplying Moscow with grain.

March 24 — Lenin presides at a meeting of the commission set up by the C.P.C. on March 23. Questions discussed include the cotton programme and irrigation works in Turkestan.

March 25 — Lenin attends a meeting of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council, at which the question of co-operative societies is discussed.

March 26 — Lenin reports to a meeting of the Bolshevik group in the Moscow Soviet, on organisational tasks in the current situation.

Lenin directs the work of a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: control of expenditure by all departments of the Supreme Economic Council (drafts the decision); the water transport situation (drafts the decision); commodity exchange with the rural areas.

March 27 — Lenin attends a meeting of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council and speaks in the debate on labour service and labour discipline.

March 28 — Lenin dictates to a shorthand typist the original version of the article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government".

March 29 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the drafting of a provisional resolution on direction of the Baltic Fleet, and other matters.

March 30 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the question of revolutionary tribunals; he amends the draft decree and drafts the C.P.C. resolution.

March — Lenin writes the preface to the collected articles *Against the Stream*.

March-April — Lenin writes the "Theses on Banking Policy".

April 1 — Lenin signs the C.P.C. decision on setting up the Supreme Military Council to direct the country's defence and organise the armed forces.

Lenin takes part in a meeting of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council to consider the question of labour discipline.

April 2 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the question of opening peace negotiations with the Ukrainian Rada in view of the German attack on Kharkov.

April 3 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the proclamation of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic; the radiotelegraph; measures to protect the Black Sea fleet in the event of a further advance by the Germans.

April 5 — In view of the Japanese landing in Vladivostok Lenin telegraphs the C.E.C. of the Siberian Soviets to prepare for defence.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the procedure to be adopted by government departments for sending commissars to the provinces, he makes amendments and additions to the draft decision.

April 6 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: appointment of a prisoner-of-war commission (drafts the decision); centralisation of the administration of post and telegraph services.

April 7 — Lenin speaks at a meeting in the Alexeyevsky Riding School.

Lenin sends a telegram to the Vladivostok Soviet warning it of the inevitability of an attack by the Japanese imperialists and of the necessity for serious defence preparations.

April 8 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: organisation of the army; the state flag of the R.S.F.S.R.

April 9 and 10 — At a meeting of the C.P.C. Lenin speaks of the question of co-operative societies and amends the draft decree on consumers' co-operative organisations.

April 11 — Lenin takes part in a joint meeting of the Supreme Economic Council and representatives of the Central Council of Trade Unions and the Central Council of the Union of Metalworkers, to discuss the question of nationalising the metallurgical industry.

April 12 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: assignment of funds to counteract unemployment; state control; the Academy of Sciences offer to make an assessment of Russia's natural wealth.

April 13 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the question of the defence of Murmansk and other matters.

Lenin signs a decree of the C.P.C. On Monuments to the Republic, providing for the removal of monuments erected in honour of the tsars and their servants and the design of monuments "to celebrate the great days of the Russian Socialist Revolution".

April 15 Lenin writes a letter to the People's Commissariat for Justice inviting all members of the board of the Commissariat to discuss with him the publication of a Collection of Enactments and Instructions and the organisation of a court that would be more rapid and ruthless in its treatment of the bourgeoisie and all embezzlers of state funds.

April 16 At a meeting of the C.P.C. Lenin edits, amends and signs the C.P.C. decree on administration of post and telegraph services in the Soviet Republic.

April 16 or 17 Lenin receives a delegation from the congress of representatives of the sugar industry in Russia and talks to them about getting the sugar refineries going again.

April 17 At a meeting of the C.P.C. Lenin signs an order to the Soviets of Kursk, Orel and other gubernias on disarming Ukrainian and German troops who cross over on to Soviet territory; he drafts a decision granting subsidies to peasants who sow beet.

April 18 Lenin speaks on the financial situation at a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: registration of shares, bonds and other interest-bearing securities (amends and makes additions to the draft decree); banning of joint-stock companies.

April 19 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: setting up of an All-Russia Evacuation Commission (amends the draft decision); assignment of funds for coal mining, and other matters.

April 20 Lenin telegraphs an inquiry to the Simbirsk Soviet about the election of chairmen of the Chuyash women's and men's teachers' seminaries and asks about I. Y. Yakovlev, an inspector with 50 years' service to the national development of the Chuyash people to his credit.

At a meeting of the C.P.C. Lenin amends the draft decree on the organisation of the Main Peat Committee. The draft is approved with Lenin's amendments.

April 22 Lenin signs the C.P.C. decree on the nationalisation of foreign trade.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the question of electrifying the industry of Moscow

and Petrograd by building hydropower stations on the rivers Volkhov and Imatra; makes notes.

Lenin writes and signs a telegram of greetings to the Congress of Soviets of the Turkestan Territory.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the defence of the eastern boundary of Kharkov Gubernia from attacks by the Germans and Haidamaks (Ukrainian nationalists).

April 22 or 23 At the Moscow City Conference of Working Women Lenin speaks on the position of the Soviet Republic.

April 23 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the question of providing agriculture with implements, machinery and metal. He writes an addendum to the draft decree.

Lenin addresses the Moscow Soviet on the current situation.

April 24 Lenin receives a delegation of workers of the Tsaritsyn Ordnance Factory who want the factory put under state control; during his discussion with the workers he makes notes on the factory's needs.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: prisoners-of-war; abolition of inheritance; amendments to the decree on providing agriculture with the means of production and metal.

April 26 At a Party Central Committee meeting Lenin submits his theses on the immediate tasks of the Soviet government. The Central Committee approves the theses and instructs him to make a report on the subject to the All-Russia C.E.C.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: organisation of assistance for the unemployed; organisation of the Central Board of Archives and Libraries; assistance for disabled soldiers.

April 27 Lenin attends a meeting of a delegation that is to be sent to negotiate a peace treaty with the Ukrai-. nian People's Republic.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: construction of power stations on the rivers Svir and Volkhov; railway construction.

April 28 Lenin's article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" published in *Pravda* No. 83 and *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 85.

April 29 — At a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. Lenin delivers the report and the reply to the debate on the current tasks of the Soviet government.

April 30 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the position of government institutions in regions occupied by the Germans; the draft decree on the making of gifts; organisation and refitting of the navy.

April — Lenin writes "Basic Propositions on Economic and Especially on Banking Policy", Lenin discusses theses on banking policy at a meeting with leading personnel from the People's Commissariat for Finance and the State Bank.

Lenin writes the "Draft Plan of Scientific and Technical Work".

May 1 — Lenin speaks at a May Day demonstration in Red Square and at a meeting of Latvian Infantry and Kremlin personnel; he attends a military parade on the Khodynka Field.

While Lenin is driving through Moscow, workers in a column of demonstrators from Sushchevo-Maryino District stop the car and lift him shoulder high. He makes a short speech on the significance of the international celebration of May Day.

May 2 — Lenin holds a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars to discuss nationalisation of the sugar industry (amends the draft decree).

May 3 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: assignment of funds for building works on the River Svir; peat extraction in the Northern District, and other matters.

The draft resolution of the All-Russia C.E.C. written by Lenin—"Six Theses on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government"—is approved by the Party Central Committee.

May 4 — Lenin writes a letter to the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.) demanding that it should consider the question of expelling from the Party the judges who have passed over-lenient sentences in a case of bribery.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the Revolutionary Tribunal's sentence in the case of bribery; setting up of military districts, and other matters,

May 5 — Lenin writes the article "'Left-Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality".

Lenin signs a telegram sent to Voronezh (copies were also sent to Orjonikidze in Rostov, and to Bryansk), on the conclusion of an armistice on the German-Ukrainian front.

May 6 — Lenin takes part in a meeting of the Party Central Committee to discuss Soviet Russia's international position and drafts a decision on the international situation.

Lenin drafts a radiogram to the peace delegation in Kursk concerning the coup carried out in the Ukraine by Skoropadsky wlth the help of the German army. The message also refers to the German capture of Rostov-on-Don.

May 8 — Lenin signs a telegram to the peace delegation in Kursk instructing it to negotiate a cease-fire with the Skoropadsky government.

Lenin instructs the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs G. V. Chicherin to send truce envoys to Kiev to negotiate an armistice with the Skoropadsky government.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the food situation (writes the main propositions of a decree on the food dictatorship); bribery (amends the draft decree); declaration of a state of emergency in the Kuban area in connection with the advance of the Germans and Ukrainian nationalists.

May, not later than May 8 — Lenin directs the People's Commissar for Justice to submit to the C.P.C. a law on penalties for bribery.

May 9 — Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the food dictatorship; the committee of state constructions (makes amendments to both decrees); mobilisation of the workers to aid the rural poor in the struggle against the kulaks (amends the draft decision).

Lenin signs a circular telegram to all Gubernia Soviets and Gubernia Food Committees on the catastrophic food situation in Petrograd and on the need to send the city immediate assistance.

Lenin takes part in a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C., which discusses and approves the decree submitted by the C.P.C. on the food dictatorship.

May 10 — In a conversation with a worker of the Putilov Works Lenin gives instructions on the selection of a reli-

able workers' army of 20,000 to deal with the rural bourgeoisie and bribery.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the work of the prisoner-of-war collegium; measures for rehabilitating and developing the economy of Siberia, etc.

Lenin approves and signs the C.P.C. decision on the assignment of a lump sum of 100,000 rubles for purchasing seed and agricultural implements for the poor peasants whose homes have been burnt in the village of Rizovatovo, Nizhni-Novgorod Gubernia.

May 11 Lenin writes a protest to the German Government against the occupation of the Crimea.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: organisation of the economy of Siberia; registration of professional people in Moscow, etc.

Lenin signs a C.P.C. decision on nationalisation of the Sudzhensk coalfields (Siberia), the Spassk Copper Works, the Biisk Tanneries and other enterprises of the extractive and processing industries.

Pravda No. 90 announces the publication of Lenin's books *The State and Revolution* and *New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture*.

May 13 Lenin takes part in a meeting of the Party Central Committee which approves Lenin's "Theses on the Present Political Situation".

At a City Party Conference Lenin delivers a report on the current political situation.

May 14 Lenin writes a preface to his pamphlet *Karl Marx*.

Lenin delivers a report on foreign policy at a joint meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. and the Moscow Soviet.

At a meeting of the Bolshevik group in the All-Russia C.E.C. and the Moscow Soviet, Lenin delivers a report on foreign and domestic policy.

May 15 At a Moscow Regional Party Conference Lenin delivers a report on the current situation.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss nationalisation of Russian banks which have foreign creditors; the possibility of concluding treaties with countries that do not recognise the Soviet government, and other matters.

May 16 Lenin instructs the Supreme Military Council to send truce envoys to the South-Eastern (Don) Front to conclude an armistice and agree on a line of demarcation on this front.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the administration of the oil industry, and other matters.

May 17 Lenin signs a C.P.C. decree on the organisation of irrigation works in Turkestan.

Lenin writes a preface to the pamphlet *The Chief Task of Our Day*.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: labour inspection; extra funds for the Vyksa Mining Area; the setting up of the Main Oil Committee.

May 18 At a session of the All-Russia Congress of Representatives of the Financial Departments of Soviets Lenin delivers a report on financial policy aims.

Lenin receives representatives of a workers' delegation elected at a conference of the big metallurgical factories, and writes a letter to the conference on preparation for and carrying out of nationalisation and on how to organise affairs at the factories.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss Soviet auditing, distribution of coal, and other matters.

May 20 At a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. Lenin takes part in the debate on Y. M. Sverdlov's report concerning the tasks of the Soviets in the rural areas.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the convention with Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey on the conditions of the maintenance and exchange of prisoners-of-war; use of the railways to build up fuel stocks, and other matters.

May 21 Lenin edits and amends the draft Appeal of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars to the Workers of Petrograd on Enrolment in the Food Detachments.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: distribution of coal and coke; organisation of an institute of agricultural science; motor transport.

May 22 Lenin writes a letter to the workers of Petrograd "On the Famine".

At the Second All-Russia Congress of Labour Commissars Lenin speaks of labour discipline and raising the productivity of labour.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the emergency revolutionary tribunal (amends the draft decree); the allotting of 100 million rubles and the dispatch of 10,000 poods of grain to Baku to ensure oil supplies.

May 23 Lenin takes part in a meeting of the Supreme Economic Council on the question of holding the First All-Russia Congress of Economic Councils and moves a proposal on how to administer the nationalised enterprises.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss complaints of bureaucratic handling of affairs in the offices of the People's Commissariats, and other matters.

May 24 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the fuel problem and drafts a decision on rules for increasing fuel production and economising in its use.

May 25 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss road transport, and the founding of a Socialist Academy of Social Sciences. He drafts decisions on both questions.

May 26 Lenin writes and submits for the Central Committee's approval the "Theses on the Current Situation", which deal with the food situation and the campaign against famine.

Lenin makes a speech of welcome on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars at the First All-Russia Congress of Economic Councils.

May 27 Lenin sends a greetings telegram to the Extraordinary Third Congress of Soviets of the Kuban-Black Sea Republic and the Congress of Front Line Soldiers in Ekaterinodar.

May 28 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss urgent measures for keeping the railwaymen supplied with food (drafts a decree on food policy), and the procedure for granting concessions.

Lenin instructs the Commander of the Black Sea fleet to destroy all naval and merchant ships in the port of Novorossiisk in view of the Germans' obvious intention of seizing them.

May 29	Lenin signs the C.P.C. appeal to the workers and peasants to organise armed detachments to fight the enemies of the people and the rural bourgeoisie.
	Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss his draft decision on prohibiting independent procurement of grain. He writes an appeal on the subject to railway and water transport workers and metal workers.
May 30	Lenin signs the C.P.C. appeal to the working Cossacks of the Don and the Kuban.
	Lenin signs the C.P.C. proclamation "Workers and Peasants!" calling for a struggle for grain against the counter-revolutionary rebels and conspirators.
	Lenin signs the All-Russia C.E.C. decree on reorganisation of the People's Commissariat for Food and local food organs.
	Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the procedure for hearing of appeals against the sentences of the revolutionary tribunals; and assignment of funds for the erection of a monument to Karl Marx.
May 31	Lenin holds a C.P.C. meeting at which he proposes publishing a fresh public proclamation in view of the worsening of the Soviet Republic's international position. The C.P.C. instructs a commission headed by Lenin to draft the proclamation.
End of May	Lenin talks by direct line with V. V. Kuibyshev, Chairman of the Samara Soviet, about Ataman Dutov's offensive against Orenburg.
June 1	Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: ways and means of supplying Siberia with Urals metal and machines; a supplementary decree on the question of independent procurement of food supplies.
Before June 3	In a telephone message to the Petrograd Soviet Lenin demands that the best food workers be sent to Moscow to be enrolled in the food detachments there.
	Lenin takes a leading part in the work of a commission elected by the First Congress of Economic Councils to work out propositions on administration of the nationalised enterprises.
	Lenin and Y. M. Sverdlov send out instructions of the C.P.C. and the All-Russia C.E.C. to the local Soviets on how to act in the event of an enemy attack on the Soviet Socialist Republic.

June 2 Lenin goes to see the play *Stepanchikovo Village* at the Moscow Art Theatre.

June 3 At a meeting of the C.P.C. Lenin moves draft decisions on financing the construction of agricultural machinery, on independent procurement, and on the adjustment of fixed prices.

June 4 At a joint meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C., the Moscow Soviet and the Trade Unions, Lenin delivers the report and replies to the debate on combating the famine, and moves a resolution he has drafted on the subject.

June 5 Lenin makes a speech of welcome on behalf of the C.P.C. at the All-Russia Congress of Internationalist Teachers.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss centralisation of banking; working out of wage rates and means of counteracting undue increases.

June 6 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss allotment of funds to meet the needs of the mining areas and factories of the Urals, and other matters.

June 7 Lenin receives representatives of the Vyshni Volochok Soviet and talks with them about the grave food crisis in their uyezd, the forming of food detachments and the tasks involved in food work. He instructs the People's Commissariat for Food to give them emergency assistance.

At a meeting of the C.P.C. Lenin writes the directives of a commission set up by the C.P.C. concerning the Socialist Academy of Social Sciences; he also drafts a C.P.C. decision on correct organisation of library work.

In a telegram to the Archangel Soviet Lenin warns of the danger of British military intervention in Murmansk and Archangel.

June 8 At a meeting of the C.P.C. Lenin moves amendments to and edits the draft decision on organisation of the rural poor and providing them with supplies.

June 10 Lenin makes a report to a meeting of the C.P.C. concerning the publishing of a manifesto on the Czechoslovak mutiny. The meeting also discusses how to draw engineers into economic and administrative work (Lenin drafts a decision on the matter).

Lenin receives a delegation of workers of the

LENIN MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

Maltsev factories (Orel Gubernia) and writes to the People's Commissariat for Food on the grave food shortage at these factories and demands emergency measures to assist the workers.

June 11 Lenin receives representatives of the Bryansk Factory (Orel Gubernia) concerning the food situation at the factory and sends them to the People's Commissariat for Food with a request that they be given emergency assistance.

Lenin instructs the Petrograd Soviet to speed up the dispatch of food detachments to the Urals via Vyatka.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: abolition of the Czechoslovak National Council in view of the armed mutiny of the Czechoslovak regiments against Soviet power; allotment of funds for the development of stock-raising, and other matters.

June 12 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss a decree on vacations, a decree on the salaries of employees and workers in Soviet institutions, and other matters.

June 14 In a letter to the Petrograd Soviet Lenin gives instructions that more detachments and more workers are to be sent to the Urals for propaganda work.

At a meeting of the C.P.C. Lenin drafts a decree on improving railway transport.

June 15 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the financing of the Central Leather Board (Glavkozha) and the granting of credit to the Central Textiles Board (Tsentrotekstil) for purchasing flax. He drafts decisions on both questions.

June 17 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the raising of Red Army men's pay, the setting up of a body to deal with questions of trade with the Ukraine, and other matters.

June 18 Lenin telegraphs S. G. Shahumyan in Baku insisting that he must do everything to get oil products sent to the Volga.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the question of funds to pay for work on hydraulic extraction of oil; teachers' salaries; and the organisation of public education.

June 19 Lenin makes a speech at a meeting of Party groups of factories in Zamoskvorechye District in Moscow concerning the food crisis.

June 20 Lenin speaks at workers' meetings in Moscow on the food detachments.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the organisation of a supreme transport board (moves amendments to the draft decision); and checking up on the work of the hydrotechnical organisations of the Northern Front; nationalisation of the oil industry.

June 21 Lenin speaks at a meeting in the Sokolniki Club and Presnya District on the campaign against famine and counter-revolution.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: extending the powers of the Commissar Extraordinary for the Murmansk Territory to cover the Belomorsk Territory; allotting funds to the Western Region and establishing it as an economic unit.

June 22 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the Semirechye Railway; rates of pay for teachers; procurement of cloth.

The C.P.C. sets up a commission under Lenin's chairmanship to consider the compilation of a general statement on state income and expenditure.

Pravda No. 125 announces publication of Lenin's books. *The Agrarian Question in Russia towards the Close of the Nineteenth Century* and *Karl Marx* (*A Biography*).

June 26 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: the Black Sea fleet; unification of financial policy.

June 27 In a telegram to the Second Penza Gubernia Congress of Soviets Lenin gives instructions on the organisation of a food army of workers and the rural poor to fight for the consolidation of the grain monopoly and requisitioning of kulak grain.

Lenin is elected a delegate to the Fifth Congress of Soviets by the Petrograd Soviet.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: library work; the housing situation in Moscow and its environs; organisation of government statistics.

June 27 and 28 At the Fourth Conference of Trade Unions and Factory Committees of Moscow Lenin makes a report and replies to the debate on the current situation.

A resolution drafted by Lenin on support for the Soviet Government's food policy is approved by the conference.

June 28

Lenin speaks on the Civil War at meetings at the AMO Works (Simonovsky Sub-District), at the former Mikhelson Works (Zamoskvorechye District), and in the Soviet Gardens of Rogozhsky District.

Lenin receives the chairman of the Temnikov Soviet, Tambov Gubernia, and discusses the situation in this uyezd.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss measures to expand the work of the Central Textile Board (moves an amendment to the draft decree); the draft Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. nationalisation of the big industrial enterprises.

June 29

Lenin is elected a delegate to the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets by the Regional Congress of the Soviets of Moscow Region.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: allotment of funds for the erection of temporary monuments to participants in the Russian revolution (Lenin's motion), the procurement and distribution of cloth, and other matters.

Lenin sends a letter of greeting to S. G. Shahumyan in Baku.

Lenin writes the article "Prophetic Words".

July 1

Lenin makes corrections to and signs a telegram to the leaders of the requisitioning detachments on all railways concerning the introduction of strict discipline in the detachments.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: evacuation of industrial plant; the rubber industry, and other matters.

July 2

Lenin addresses a meeting of about 1,500 mobilised men in the Alexeyevsky Riding School.

Izvestia VTsIK No. 135 announces the publication of Lenin's books, *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government* and *The Fight for Grain*.

At a meeting of the C.P.C. Lenin introduces an emergency motion on assisting the peasants with agricultural machinery; on Lenin's suggestion the C.P.C. sets up a commission to find ways of giving the peasants practical assistance.

July 3 At a meeting of the Communist group at the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets Lenin speaks on Soviet Russia's external and domestic position.

July 5 Lenin delivers the C.P.C. report and reply to the debate at the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

July 6 Lenin sends a telephone message to all district Party committees, all district Soviets, and all Red Army headquarters concerning the Left S.R.s provocatory assassination of German Ambassador Mirbach and orders mobilisation of all forces to deal with these criminals.

July 8 Lenin edits and signs a telegram to all uyezd Soviets of Moscow Gubernia insisting that measures be taken to clear the districts of bands, of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Izvestia VTsIK No. 141 publishes an interview with Lenin concerning the Left S.R.s uprising.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the Sormovo-Kolomna factories, the Moscow-motor-car workshops and other matters.

July 11 Lenin telegraphs the Commissar of Voronezh to inform him that the Left S.R. revolt has been crushed, and gives him orders and directives concerning military operations on the Czechoslovak and Kuban fronts.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss endorsement of the statement on state income and expenditure for January-June 1918, the setting up of the People's Commissariat for Public Health (signs the decree), and other matters.

July 12 Lenin writes a letter "To the Workers of Petrograd", appealing for a mass campaign in the countryside to organise the poor against the kulaks.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: progress made in investigating the assassination of Mirbach; the organisation of control over water passenger transport, and other matters.

July 13 Lenin writes a note to the People's Commissariat for Naval Affairs requesting them to speed up the dispatch of warships to the Caspian Sea.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: unification of all forms of protection for the rail-

ways; the housing situation in Moscow; allotment of funds for the Volkhov power development.

July 15 At a meeting of the All-Russia C.E.C. Lenin makes a statement on behalf of the Soviet Government, categorically rejecting the German Government's proposal to send a battalion of German soldiers to Moscow to guard the German Embassy.

July 16 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: means of nationalising all the textiles in the R.S.F.S.R.; raising of salaries of People's Commissars (both matters raised by Lenin); organisation of an Extraordinary Commission for combating counter-revolution on the Czechoslovak front, and other matters.

July 17 *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 149 publishes a message, written by Lenin and approved by the All-Russia C.E.C., to workers, peasants and Red Army men concerning the Left S.R. insurrection and the need for triple vigilance, caution and endurance.

Lenin telegraphs the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Turkestan Republic informing him of the measures being taken to aid the republic and of energetic action to crush the Czechoslovak mutiny.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: inclusion of Kazan Gubernia as a part of the Volga Military Area (Lenin's proposal), the erection in Moscow of 50 monuments to great people in the sphere of revolutionary and social work; safeguarding of the libraries and book depositories of the R.S.F.S.R.

July 18 Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C, to discuss: the textiles monopoly (amends the draft decree); allotment of funds for putting the Archangel area and the Arctic flotilla in a state of military preparedness, and other matters.

July 19 Lenin receives a delegation from the Congress of Byelorussian Refugees, who have brought him greetings from the congress and informed him of the condition of the Byelorussian people.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss: centralisation of radio work; manufacture of goods for export; mobilisation on the home front and rules for the registration of non-working elements of society.

Lenin speaks on the international and domestic situation at a meeting in Lefortovo District of Moscow.

July 20 — In a note to Zinoviev, Lashovich and Stasova Lenin demands the immediate dispatch of hundreds of thousands of workers to the Czechoslovak front and reminds them of their responsibility and of the consequences that failure to carry out this directive may involve.

July 22 — Lenin telegraphs S. G. Shahumyan on behalf of the C.P.C. and the All-Russia C.E.C. instructing the Baku Soviet to take resolute action against the agents of foreign capital.

Lenin holds a meeting of the C.P.C. to discuss the draft decree on combating profiteering, the annulment of the convention on literature between Russia and Germany, and other matters.

July 23 — Lenin delivers a report on the current situation to the Moscow Gubernia Conference of Factory Committees.

July 26 — Lenin receives leaders of the Central Consumers' Co-operative Society and discusses the state of organisation of the consumers' co-operatives and suggests making maximum use of the co-operative societies in the work of procuring grain.

Lenin makes a speech in Khamovniki District. in Moscow on "What Does the Soviet Constitution Give the Working People".

Lenin writes a letter to Clara Zetkin about the fierce struggle with counter-revolution and expresses his firm confidence in the triumph of the revolution.

July 27 — In a note transmitted by direct line to the chairman of the Petrograd Soviet Lenin insists categorically that the "opposition on the part of the Petrograd Section of the Central Committee" must stop and that a larger number of workers be sent to the Czech front.

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В. И. ЛЕНИН

СОЧИНЕНИЯ

Том 27

На английскот языке